DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 461 613 SP 037 535

AUTHOR	Kovaleski, Joseph F., Ed.
TITLE	The Instructional Support Team (IST) Overview. Trainer's Manual.
INSTITUTION	Instructional Support System of Pennsylvania, East Petersburg.
SPONS AGENCY	Pennsylvania State Dept. of Education, Harrisburg.
REPORT NO	IST-200
PUB DATE	1993-08-00
NOTE	125p.; For related IST documents, see SP 037 536-545.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom - Teacher (052)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Educational Change; Elementary Education; Faculty Development; *Inservice Teacher Education; *Instructional Improvement; Models; Partnerships in Education; Special Education; *Special Needs Students; State Programs; State Standards; Student Evaluation; *Team Training; Teamwork; Tutors
IDENTIFIERS	*Instructional Support; Pennsylvania

ABSTRACT

This introduction to and overview of the series of training modules was developed to assist school personnel in implementing the Instructional Support Team (IST) process. Although each module covers a specific aspect of training, each is interconnected and dependent upon an understanding of the purposes behind IST and the way the IST process functions. The manual is in four parts. Part 1, "Understanding the Instructional Support Team Process," focuses on IST training objectives, general and specific purposes of IST, degree of need, fading out IST services, and key personnel. Part 2, "Understanding How the IST Process Functions," looks at phases of the IST process including hypothesis forming, verifying, outcomes, and documentation. Part 3 covers "How IST Functions for Students with Disabilities." Part 4, "The Use of Coaching and Guided Practice in Instructional Support Training," explores goals and effectiveness of staff development and the definition and value of coaching. The specific objective of each part is outlined, along with activities and key points; overheads are used to illustrate the process. Each part includes references and support materials. The final section provides masters for all the overheads used in the training manual. (ND)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 461 613

IST The Instructional Support Team

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

J.F. Kovaleski

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

OVERVIEW:

Trainer's Manual

Instructional Support Team
Project of Pennsylvania
1110 Enterprise Road
East Petersburg PA 17520

A Systematic Search for What Works!

#200
8-93

SP037535

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Acknowledgments

The following individuals had major responsibility for the development of:

Sections I & II

Bonnie Evans
Instructional Support Team Consultant
Luzerne County Intermediate Unit

Edward E. Gickling, Ph.D.
IST Consultant for Instructional Assessment
Pennsylvania Department of Education

Deborah Hartman
Allentown School District

Judith Iasiello
Instructional Support Team Consultant
Colonial Northampton Intermediate Unit

Gail McGregor, Ed.D.
Associate Professor of Education
University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point

Section III

Jeannine Brinkley
Director, GATEWAYS Initiative

Section IV

Kay A. Chick
Teaching Associate
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

We also would like to acknowledge the many contributors who provided input and ideas that helped frame the direction of this manual: Kathy Bradley, Patricia Conahan, N. Kay Dively, Dr. Richard Erdlen, Dr. Rosalind Fudell, Lee Gilreath, Sally Metz, Alma Miller-Sennett, Elayne Moe, Sue Mowery, Marcia Rex, Danette Richards, Richard Rudisill, L. Glenn Rupp, and Donna Srohecker.

Joseph F. Kovaleski, D.Ed., Editor
Director
Instructional Support Team Project

ORIENTATION

to the

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT TEAM PROCESS

PREPARATIONS FOR IST TRAINING

Materials

A series of training modules has been developed to assist school personnel in implementing the Instructional Support Team (IST) process. Although each module provides a specific aspect of training, each is interconnected and dependent upon (1) an understanding of the purposes behind IST and (2) how the IST process functions. All training, therefore, should begin with this two part orientation. Both parts are central to understanding and implementing the IST process.

Once school personnel become acquainted with the purposes of IST and how it functions, specific strategies and skills can be taught using the other training modules. These modules are:

Collaboration/team building
Curriculum-based assessment
Instructional adaptations
Effective interaction patterns
Student assistance strategies
Instructional evaluation

The order in which these modules are to be presented as well as the amount of guided and independent practices needed will depend upon the particular needs and skills of the individual IST members.

Each completed module contains a trainer's manual (including masters for overhead transparencies) and participant manuals. For convenient reference the pages in the participant's manual will be identified as P1, P2, etc, and in the trainer's manual T1, T2, etcetera. Individuals responsible for training should use the trainer's manual, individuals being trained should use the participant's manual.

Supplies & Media

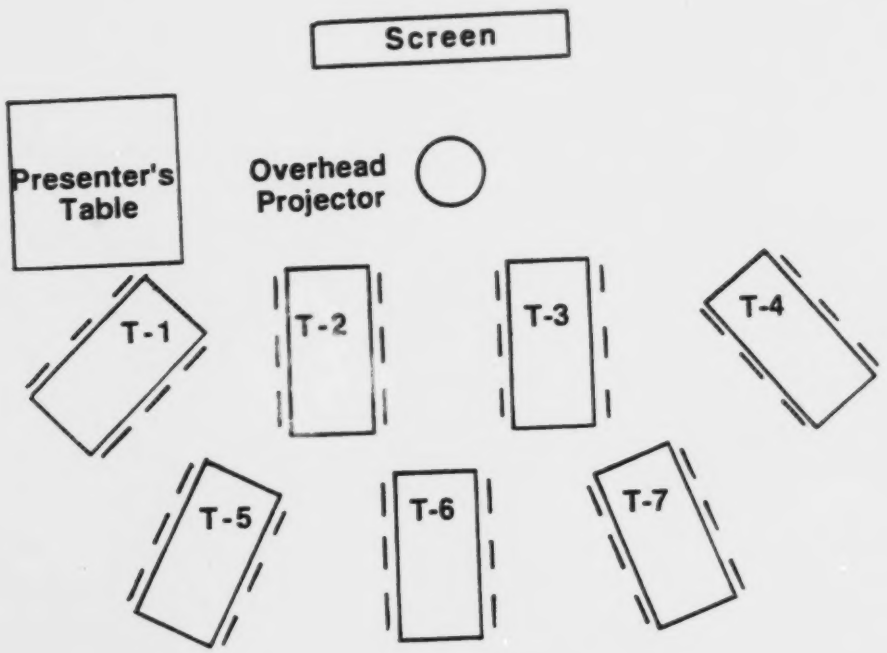
Each training module requires the use of an overhead projector and screen, a VCR and large television monitor, and in some cases a tape recorder. Other supplies used periodically during training are: a large blackboard, butcher paper, wide mouth marking pens, masking tape, easel, and clear transparencies and marking pens for transparencies.

Supplemental Resources

Trainers' manuals were designed to keep the pace of training peppy while highlighting key points, concepts and activities. Trainers are to use their professional judgement as to how much emphasis should be placed on a particular area of training. They are encouraged to refer to and to use the supplemental resources in the appendices, and to add to these resources other items which they feel will strengthen training. They are also encouraged to share such items with fellow trainers and with members of Instructional Support Teams.

Room Arrangements

The Instructional Support Team concept is based on a team building, collaborative/problem-solving process. Room arrangements work best when the seating allows team members opportunities to practice this process under actual training conditions. The recommended seating arrangement for this purposes is for tables and chairs to be placed in a herringbone design with four to six chairs per table. Team members sit across from each other as illustrated below. They face the screen during general instruction and rotate 1/4 turn to face each other during problem-solving activities.



T2

BRIEF HISTORY
OF
INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT

Overhead 1 (Traditional Approaches)
(P2)

Classroom teachers have always been challenged and sometimes puzzled and frustrated by students who appear unable to "fit in". During their teaching careers they all have had experience with students in conflict, with students who constantly lag behind academically, with students who act inappropriately, and with students who act disruptively.

There has always been a realization on the part of teachers and parents that these children need help. Considerable friction, however, has occurred over the best way of providing educational help, who should receive it, and who should pay for it. The primary approach initially taken to address this problem was to identify students on the basis of individual needs and abilities and to create separate programs for them. Attempting to distinguish between the needs and abilities of students on this basis led to the creation of formal systems of referring, testing, and the placement of children into educational categories. The institutionalization of these practices was reinforced by the bureaucracies which supported them and which developed the criteria for student selection and professional training. The perpetuation of this process was largely assured as issues of access, eligibility and even due process began to dominate the educational scene based upon those criteria which had been established.

While a number of positive outcomes were achieved to the benefit of many students through this process, (e.g., education for all, attention to individual needs) the process itself has been laden with problems. It resulted in the overreferral and overidentification of students, an overcrowding of programs, and an overdependence on special education and Chapter I services. In many cases, the referral, testing and placement process created gaps involving delays in students receiving services. In other cases, the process caused increasing numbers of students to be denied services leaving them suspended in classroom programs with teachers uncertain about how to help them. The criticism, however, does not end here. The overreliance on the use of pull-out programs created what Reynolds, Wang, Walberg (1987) and Skrtic (1987) referred to as parallel, separate, and/or second systems of education; systems which led to the removal of children from classroom programs where integrated instruction was possible and where students may have been able to achieve and succeed if given the proper support.

Aware of the problems of students who are hard-to-teach and hard-to-reach, the Governor's Task Force on the Education of Students with Disabilities in 1988 formally recommended that instructional support be made available to students before being considered for and referred to special education. This effort spawned the creation of a number of Quality Education Initiatives sponsored by the Bureau of Special Education of the Pennsylvania Department of Education. These initiatives stressed the importance of having classroom assessment and prereferral intervention practices established as a routine part of elementary school activities. The Department of Education, in addition, began to implement an elementary school version of the highly successful Student Assistance Program to address the mental health needs of elementary age children. These combined efforts, along with the principles and practices on which they were based, provided the impetus for what was to become known as the Pennsylvania Instructional Support Team initiative (See Pennsylvania Bulletin, June 1990), an initiative which is to be implemented in every school district throughout the state of Pennsylvania by June 30, 1995.

Overhead 2 (Combining Resources) (P3)

Page P3 depicts how two of the divisions within the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the Bureau of Student Services and the Bureau of Special Education, functioned separately to serve the needs of at-risk students. Prior to the IST initiative, the Bureau of Student Services had piloted and implemented a Student Assistance Program (SAP) for secondary students and an Elementary Student Service Program (ESSP). Both programs were directed toward serving the mental health needs (i.e. drugs, alcohol, child abuse, youth suicide, coping skills, etc.) of each respective age group. During the same time frame, The Bureau of Special Education undertook several Quality Education Initiatives (i.e. Teacher Assistance Teams, Project Link, Curriculum-Based Assessment for Instructional Design, etc.) to meet the educational needs of at-risk students in the regular classroom. These models stressed the use of pre-referral interventions for students who were experiencing difficulties in school.

In 1991, the ESSP program mandated by Act 211 and the IST program mandated by the Special Education Rules and Regulations merged to become a joint IST model. Rather than providing separate services at the elementary level, the two programs combined their expertise and training resources to become a more efficient system for addressing the academic, social/emotional, communication and behavioral needs of at-risk students within the general education milieu. This merger is an outstanding example of the collaborative effort of two bureaus to foster the use of the combined expertise of individuals throughout school buildings to better serve the needs of at-risk students. An explanation of this merger is included on P4 of the participant's manual.

Key Points

Schools and teams who recognize the value of these combined efforts and who have participated in this change process have found it to be a challenging yet extremely rewarding experience, and really the only way to serve children. Trainers are encouraged to provide success stories showing how the joint IST model has enhanced instruction for students and has forged strong working relationships between school building staffs, parents and communities.

The IST Initiative

Originally viewed as a prereferral strategy and written into the rules and regulations as a level III screening requirement, the IST initiative was designed to provide successful programs for at-risk youngsters within general classroom environments thus reducing the number of students formally referred to and placed in special education. It was also envisioned as a means of empowering classroom teachers to meet the diverse learning needs of students in their classrooms. The vision was quickly expanded as educators realized the potential power of maximizing the teaching resources within schools through collaboration between general and special education and other remedial programs.

The IST process in elementary schools was to represent a fluid system of problem solving and support driven by students' needs, not inflexible procedures. It was to be less rule bound, to provide for greater cohesiveness, coordination, and instructional continuity, and to complement existing curriculum and instructional programs. Success depended upon developing a working partnership involving building principals, general education, special education, Chapter I teachers, specialists, counselors, school psychologists, parents, and other key personnel. The critical question shifted from "What was wrong with the student?" to "What resources could be brought to bear to maximize the probability of the student being successful?"

In forming the IST concept, a strong desire existed to create a seamless educational system where students were not delayed or denied assistance and where they would no longer "fall through the cracks" because of the poor coordination between general, special education, and Chapter I programs. The starting point was to determine what each student actually knew and could do in contrast to the demands of the instructional and social environment. With students abilities as a starting point, a positive and effective intervention plan could be developed. At the core of this process was the belief that all students can learn and that all students matter.

Overhead 3 (The Starfish)
(P5)

Share with the audience a reading of "The Starfish". Reinforce the point that all students matter and that all students need to achieve and succeed in school.

Key Points

Tne Starfish story is an excellent way of sensitizing members of the audience about the importance of each individual. Each individual student needs to feel accepted and feel a sense of belonging in order to function well in school.

Resources

Appendix A contains several resource documents. The first document highlights the history of the Instructional Support Team process. The second document consists of the official regulations and standards governing IST as defined and described in Chapters 14 and 432 of the official Rules and Regulations. IST trainers may find these materials useful when presenting initial information about IST.

PART I

UNDERSTANDING THE INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT TEAM PROCESS

Objectives

Overhead 4 (IST Training Objectives)
(P6)

There are two main objectives which are to be met by each participant during this IST training session. These objectives are:

1. **To articulate the general and specific purposes of the Instructional Support Team process.**

2. **To describe how the IST process functions, including the personnel, steps, and timelines involved in its successful implementation.**

Introduction

In July of 1990, The Pennsylvania Special Education Rules and Regulations introduced the Instructional Support Team initiative. In many ways, this initiative mirrored as well as expanded upon prior initiatives to form a comprehensive state-wide system designed to address the diverse learning needs of students who become frustrated, lose interest, and flounder during their elementary school age years.

Overhead 5 (All About IST)
(P7)

Activity

Ask participants to turn to page 7. Explain that you would like each person to take 5 minutes and respond to the first two questions.

1. **What do you Know about IST?**
2. **What do you Want to find out about IST?**

Engage the participants in a group discussion to clarify their knowledge of IST and to identify specific questions which need to be addressed.

Key Points

The trainer is to determine the participants' general knowledge of IST and to direct remarks to clarify the specific questions and concerns raised by them about IST. These questions will need to be addressed and their answers refined time and again throughout the course of training and perhaps throughout the school year depending upon the specificity of the situation.

General Purpose of IST

The mission of Instructional Support is to identify students in elementary classrooms who are at-risk of school failure and to provide them with the necessary academic, behavioral, communication and social/emotional support needed to succeed in school. This is accomplished through collaborative school-based structures where team building, shared expertise, and teacher empowerment occur for the betterment of schools, students and teachers alike.

Overhead 6 (IST Mission Statement)
(P8)

Key Points

Two key points should be emphasized with regard to the mission statement.

First, each participant should realize that the primary role of the Instructional Support Team is to support students who have academic, behavioral, communication and social/emotional needs within regular classroom programs.

Second, participants should realize that IST provides a mechanism for school personnel to participate in the school reform and restructuring process. This is fostered through the development of collaborative school-based approaches where team building, shared expertise, and teacher empowerment occur for the betterment of students, teachers and schools alike.

Separate from the two points made in the mission statement is another point which should be made about the relationship between IST and Outcome Based Education (OBE). Participants should realize that IST training contains many of the elements which are essential to the development of OBE. For example, they both focus on student performance. It is important for administrators and teachers to understand this linkage and not to perceive IST as something separate from OBE. IST is very compatible with and can be very helpful in facilitating the development and monitoring of OBE approaches throughout the state of Pennsylvania.

Specific Purposes of IST

Beyond its general purpose, there are several specific purposes which need to be accomplished through IST. The trainer is to cover each of these purposes elaborating as needed to distinguish between and to clarify the various points.

Overhead 7 (Instructional Support Includes) (P9)

Key Points

Instructional Support is a process which includes:

1. Identifying students who need academic, behavioral, communication and social/emotional support.
2. Convening Instructional Support Team meetings to advocate for the specific needs of identified students.
3. Applying selected interventions and management strategies to determine what works for each student.
4. Providing in classroom support for students and teachers.
5. Expanding the capability of classroom teachers by involving them in team decision making, problem solving, and guided practice.
6. Monitoring the effectiveness of implementing the intervention and determining the rate of student progress.
7. Determining how to best meet the identified needs of students through a continuum of services.

Overhead 8 (Degree of Need)
(P10)

The three dimensional figure on page P10 illustrates that the needs of students' referred to IST may range from a minimum amount of extra help for a limited period of time to extensive help over a long period of time. The dimensions of concern include: (1) the personnel required to work with the student, (2) the level of curriculum adjustment or adaptation needed by the student, and (3) the amount of time given to planning and instruction. The IST's **first** consideration is to create those conditions which enable the student to be successful. Its **second** consideration is to determine the amount of support required to sustain the level of student's success within the general classroom program. The **third** consideration is to determine if the effort required is beyond the scope of what can be provided reasonably within the general classroom. As classroom teachers collaborate with team members in developing and implementing workable intervention programs, and as they expand their own teaching and management skills, they become more capable of dealing with increasing levels of student diversity. Full participation helps to create a win/win situation for everyone who participates in the IST process.

There is an growing desire among educators to include all students within regular classroom programs. This "inclusion" effort emphasizes appropriate in-class support regardless of the students' strengths or limitations. Class placement is not contingent upon grade level mastery. Instead, performance and schedules are individually determined based upon matching the student's needs to classroom activities. While this approach does not preclude other instructional settings, the student's primary identity is as a member of the regular class along with his/her chronological age peers.

Key Points

The purpose of IST is to determine "what works" for the student. It is not enough to say that an intervention has been tried; the team must search to find what works. After the team has successfully determined what works, the key question is, "Can the classroom teacher continue to provide for the learning needs of the student once the instructional support teacher's efforts have been phased out?" If not, what must be added within the continuum of services to provide support for this level of need?

Fading Out IST Service

Schools which are successful in implementing the IST process are those which establish and maintain a commitment to the needs of all children. They foster collaborative team-building relationships among staff and create a climate where all staff are viewed as support persons. They desire to increase the teaching repertoires of their members and provide training on effective strategies for reaching at-risk children. Unlike the expert model where specialists are view as the intervention, however, effective IST schools help their staffs to understand that the strategies and the management systems employed within the classroom are the interventions, not the support teacher or other support team members who facilitate the intervention.

Overhead 9 (Guided Practice)
(P11)

Guided practice has been the model of choice within IST training. It recognizes that real training occurs when those being trained have the opportunity to see intervention strategies being modeled, have sufficient opportunity to practice the strategies accurately under the guidance of a trainer, and have the opportunity to become comfortable and automatic by practicing them independently. It is the same model which has been so effective in the teaching of children, a model which simply says **"Watch Me", "Do It With Me", "Now You Do It"**.

Key Points

One difficulty of being a support teacher or team member is that of being perceived by classroom teachers as the intervention rather than as a facilitator of the intervention. When perceived in this manner, the performance of the student often wanes when it is time to fade out support services. To make a smooth transition, classroom teachers need guided practice in order to feel comfortable in using specific strategies and in managing the learning conditions to accommodate the at risk student.

When assessing performance and planning intervention procedures, it is important not only to brainstorm what the intervention might be, but also to brainstorm ways to manage the intervention effectively within the classroom.

Key Personnel

Overhead 10 (Key Personnel)

Regional and IU Consultants oversee implementation of the IST process in schools throughout the state of Pennsylvania. Instructional Support Teams and Instructional Support Teachers have specific responsibility for making the IST process work at the building level. **P12** provides a brief explanation of the roles of the consultants, support teams, and support teachers.

Regional and IU Consultants

Based in the eastern, midstate, and western regional instructional support centers, intermediate units and local school districts, a cadre of consultants have responsibility for overseeing the installation of the IST process within IST schools throughout Pennsylvania. The consultants are assigned an average of eight school buildings in order to provide intensive training for effective implementation of the IST process at the local building level. Roles of the consultants includes:

1. Providing intensive guidance to Instructional Support Teams by organizing in-district training on the IST components and by offering guided practice on the components for support teachers, team members, and school personnel.

2. Providing on-site technical assistance.

3. Coordinating the development of local networks of support teachers and Instructional Support Teams.

Consultants are responsible for organizing regional and local training to develop team competencies and for providing building based follow-up on a regular and systematic basis conforming to the guided practice model.

In selecting and developing the training components, it was clear that training in collaboration was critical to the successful implementation of the IST process. Skills in problem solving, effective communication, team building and maintenance were essential to the development of school based partnerships where teams participate in the decision-making process and share responsibility for meeting the instructional needs of at-risk students.

Collaboration implies that there is parity between participating team members, that they share authority in making decisions and that they assume mutual responsibility. Consultation, on the other hand, assumes that the consultant has additional information and/or skills to impart to the benefits of others parties. While collaborative principles are fostered before, during, and after each training segment, the IST consultant has the responsibility of imparting knowledge and skill about the various IST components to the benefit of support teachers, team members, and school personnel.

When introducing the concept of Instructional Support into schools, consultants must be very clear about what needs to be accomplished. For example, they must be clear about how to determine and use prior knowledge to build and maintain an instructional match. They need to stay focused on their work. This is particularly true given the emphasis IST places on curriculum and instruction. In spite of this emphasis, favorable instructional changes do not always occur as they should. Often times what has not worked for the student in the past remains untouched. At other times, interventions are not targeted at the delivery system of the classroom or are implemented without adequate coordination.

Overhead 11 (Valuable IST Resources)
(P13)

Instructional Support Teams

While the building principal, the referring classroom teacher and the support teacher are the required members of the team, other key individuals such as the reading or math specialist, school psychologist, guidance counselor, special education teacher, parents, school nurse and social worker may also serve as members of the team depending upon the particular needs of the student. The overhead illustrates how the combined expertise of these individuals are linked to serve the student. School districts should configure their teams to best meet their unique needs while accomplishing the primary goal of IST which is to provide support to children having difficulty in school and to the identified handicapped students receiving instruction in general classes and programs.

Activity

Sitting five to six participants per table, have each participant briefly introduce himself or herself to the other participants at the table and describe the type of expertise they would bring to the team. After 10 minutes of this small group activity, reconvene as a large group and debrief listing the expertise available in various elementary school buildings and to potential IST teams.

Key Points

Accentuate how valuable each individual's expertise is to the success of the team effort, and the range of expertise which is available when professionals work together collaboratively.

Working Together

Instructional Support Teams typically meet on a regular basis before or after school for 30 to 60 minutes, or during the day at times designated for team meetings. It is imperative that sufficient time be provided for team meetings.

When working as intended, Instructional Support Teams become a forum for teacher empowerment. Within a collaborative atmosphere, teachers are able to participate in group decision making and to shape the quality of their professional lives. As team members, they are able to help the building principal accomplish much of the inservice and restructuring agenda needed within the school by empowering staff members to work together to establish and accomplish their goals.

The building of strong teams requires team members to develop the collaborative skills needed to maintain close working relationships with classroom teachers. In doing this, Instructional Support Teams need to be aware that classroom teachers are being asked to change. They are being asked to view assessment, curriculum and instruction in different ways perhaps than they have in the past.

The development of interpersonal skills by all team members needs to be seen as a major factor in supporting the change process involved in instructional consultation. Obviously, difficulties with communication and interpersonal relationships can stall the consulting process. For example, the desire to maintain a close working relationship with the classroom teacher may cause team members to tread too lightly on key issues at a student's expense in order to sooth the feelings of a teacher. A delicate balance exists in fostering a working relationship between the classroom teacher and the team and the persuasive skills needed of the team in order to impact favorably upon the instructional system used by the classroom teacher. A climate of respect, of shared expertise, yet of openness is essential to move the IST process forward for the benefit of the student and teacher.

Key Points

Direct involvement by the building principal in administering the IST process is essential for its success within the building. The principal sets the tone by his or her degree of commitment to the IST process.

Specific modifications to an instructional program must be worked out between the classroom teacher and other IST members. Remember, the modifications which are agreed upon must be **"supported"** by the team and they must be **"doable"** from the perspective of the classroom teacher.

Key Points

Consultation skills should not be confined to addressing interpersonal agendas, but should be used to improve the instructional environment, the delivery system and the management system of the classroom for the benefit of the child and the school community. In essence, Instructional Support Teams should view much of their role as that of being instructional consultants.

Overhead 12 (Support Teacher's Role)

Support Teachers

The acronym **FACTS** represents an excellent way of internalizing and reviewing the major functions performed by the support teacher--functions which are briefly reviewed for training participants on **P14**. While the support teacher may possess a good deal of instructional expertise, he or she is not to be viewed as the so called "expert" of the school. Instead the support teacher functions as a facilitator bringing forth the expertise existing within the school. In many respects, support teachers are actually facilitators of change. They help coordinate, collaborate, assess, train, and assist the building staff in meeting the special instructional needs of students who struggle within general classroom programs. Finally, they systematically collect and organize all data required for making instructional decisions.

Support teachers, under the supervision of building principals, provide instructional support at the direction of Instructional Support Teams. They facilitate the problem-solving and intervention process for students at-risk of school failure, and also the screening of students suspected of being eligible for special education services. Their duties include providing consultation, technical assistance and training to teachers and parents of students referred to IST. Additionally, they direct instructional services to identified students within general classroom environments for the purposes of determining students' instructional levels and needs.

Following the procedures and timelines outlined in the regulations, support teachers consult with classroom teachers on students referred for instructional support, perform in-class observations, conduct curriculum-based assessments, and participate in all IST meetings. In addition, support teachers work with individual students referred to IST for the purposes of: (1) specifying instructional needs, and (2) demonstrating effective intervention techniques through modeling and providing guided practice within the classroom.

The role of the support teacher should be understood in the context of a Level III Screening. In all cases, the Instructional Support Team should plan for the support teacher's "fading out" of direct involvement with the student in favor of the classroom teacher or other general education personnel assuming that role in accordance with IST procedures and timelines.

For example, the IST may determine that the support teacher should apply CBA and attempt a systematic strategy with the referred student during the 30 day intervention period. Assuming that the strategy was effective and that the student demonstrated progress, it is the duty of the IST to develop a plan in which the strategy piloted by the support teacher is used by the classroom teacher with available support from other staff or students within the school building. While the services of the IST within the school are to continue for the classroom teacher, the direct services of the support teacher are to end at this juncture.

The following functions are not appropriate for the role of the support teacher.

1. Writing IEPs for exceptional students.
2. Preparing and/or presenting "Notices of Recommended Assignment" to parents of exceptional children.
3. Becoming a permanent tutor or special class teacher of a referred student.
4. Substituting for absent teachers or other staff.
5. Serving as a designee for the principal in non-IST meetings.
6. Conducting performance evaluations or observations on professional staff.
7. Becoming the school "materials maker".
8. Providing learning enhancement for gifted students.
9. Administering standardized tests for multidisciplinary evaluations.

Key Points

Support teachers have clearly defined roles within the IST process which they perform in accordance with the specific procedures and timelines outlined in the

Special Education Rules and Regulations. While their basic responsibility resides with students who have been referred to the IST process, they function best when they use the combined expertise within the school to support classroom teachers in meeting the learning needs of each and every student in school.

In addition to functioning as a member of the Instructional Support Team, the support teacher may also be asked to participate in the Multidisciplinary Evaluation (MDE) for students who are at that stage of the IST process. Services of support team members may also be enlisted for including special education students into general education settings as specified on the Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) of students. In such cases, the support teacher helps facilitate the inclusion process, but the special education and classroom teachers are responsible for providing instruction.

Case Managers

While some Instructional Support Teams have not found their caseload to be unmanageable, others have so many referrals that the support teacher cannot effectively intervene with each student. In this type of situation the school has developed a case manager system whereby every member of the team becomes responsible on a rotating basis for specific students referred to the IST process. By sharing caseload responsibilities, teams can effectively support large numbers of referred students.

Notes to Trainers

In schools where full inclusion is practiced, special educators will be called upon to work with eligible students in regular classroom programs. For instance, a teacher of the physically handicapped, the deaf, or the severely retarded, would provide services in the regular classroom. Special education is seen as a program and not as a place.

Resources

Appendix B contains several documents designed to help trainers become more versed in understanding the roles and responsibilities of the IST. The first set elaborates on the principal's role and the support teacher's role within the IST process. Next, suggestions are provided for how the support teacher can use his or her time profitably during the beginning weeks of school. Finally, a needs assessment is included for the support teacher's use.

PART II

UNDERSTANDING HOW THE IST PROCESS FUNCTIONS

Overview

The purpose of the IST process is to provide instructional support to elementary age students experiencing academic, behavioral, communication and/or social/emotional difficulties, thereby enabling them to succeed within general classroom programs. While the IST oversees this responsibility, the system for delivering instructional support is through the IST process. PART II of the manual serves both as an introduction and as a training tool for teaching how the IST process functions.

Overhead 13 or Overlays 13A, B, C (The IST Process) (P15)

Notes to Trainers

Use the single transparency (Overhead 13) or the set of overlays (13A, B, & C) depending upon your personal preference.

The figures on page P15 illustrate the three major dimensions of instructional support. The first dimension focuses on the students themselves. A Venn diagram is used to depict the concerns which typically face students who are at-risk in school. The problems they face are not generally isolated, but frequently overlap across academic, communication, social/emotional and behavioral domains.

The second dimension reflects the support team's concern for the "whole child", including a desire to conduct a naturalistic assessment of the child's academic, behavioral, communication and social/emotional needs. Using the collaborative

problem-solving model, the team proceeds through four interrelated phases of the IST process: **ENTRY, HYPOTHESIS FORMING, VERIFYING,** and **OUTCOMES** in order to clarify and to focus on the presenting problem or combination of problems. During each of these phases, the support team assesses the student's needs, provides appropriate interventions, evaluates the success of the interventions and determines the next course of action. Time allowed to complete the entire four phase process should not exceed a total of 60 school days.

The third dimension involves the training components, components which were chosen because of their successful history in working with at-risk youngsters. For the IST process to work smoothly, meaning that members of the team function as a team and that appropriate interventions are chosen and applied effectively, a repertoire of skills need to be present among the team members. Each skill area reflected in the training components is essential to the success of the overall IST process. Because of their importance, each component will be presented as a separate training module. The remainder of this module focuses on the IST Process.

Key Points

Participant page P15 presents the three dimensions of Instructional Support collectively. For ease of training, though, these dimensions may be presented separately. The trainer may start by presenting the Venn Diagram and explaining its ramifications. The IST Collaborative Problem-Solving Process is presented next followed by a brief overview of the four phases of the IST process and how this process adheres to naturalistic assessment. The third and final step is the presentation of six training components. A brief explanation of each component is appropriate.

Phases of the IST Process

Overheads 14-18 (Phases of the IST Process) (P16)

(Progressive Steps)

Activity

Participants' attention is called to page P16 of their manual. This page provides a skeletal outline to be filled out by each participant as the trainer presents essential information about the four phases of the IST process.

Notes to Trainers

While the participants are viewing the skeletal outline of the Phases of the IST Process on P16 of their manuals, the trainers will be using **Four Progressive Steps** to walk the participants through the IST process. For example, the trainers present the first overhead and engages the participants in a discussion of what occurs during the **Entry** phase. As the group completes this discussion, they progress to the **Hypothesis Forming** phase, then to the **Verifying** phase and finally to the **Outcome** phase. The narrative which follows should provide sufficient information for the trainers to elaborate on each phase of the IST process and to explain how the four phases interface with the other. An abbreviated text of the four phases is provided on **P17-19** for the participants.

The Entry Phase (Overhead 14)
(P17)

The Entry phase begins with a "Request for Assistance" by a classroom teacher, other professional, or parent(s) about a presenting problem. The principal must record the request by logging in pertinent data such as the student's name, referring person(s), the nature of the concern, the date the request was initiated, and ultimately the date of the IST meeting. The 60 day timeline begins when the principal logs in the request.

If a parent did not make the request, he or she must be notified by the building principal that a request for assistance has been initiated and encouraged to participate. This is the first step in gaining parental support for the IST process. If the teacher makes the request, he or she should understand that the presenting problem is not being transferred to someone else. Rather, the teacher will be given support to deal effectively with the problem in the classroom. Following the request for assistance, further information is gathered about the presenting problem from the referring teacher, the parent and the student. This information is collected thorough the process of naturalistic assessment which includes: structured interviews, systematic observations, sampling of permanent products, record reviews, teacher checklists, and behavioral/performance inventories. The information may be gathered by any member of the team. The time given to completing the Entry phase is a maximum of 10 days after a Request for Assistance has been initiated.

Key Points

The Entry phase is devoted to collecting information for the purpose of clarifying the presenting problem and for developing a trusting and collaborative relationship among all members of the support team. The review process is accomplished by convening a formal team meeting with all members of the team to discuss the different aspects of the child's needs. An alternative method involves routing the initial data gathered by the support teacher, principal, or case manager to each team member and asking for their input. This information is used to guide further investigation. The review might also take the appearance of one-to-one collaboration where the support teacher would approach each team member and have him or her add new information where relevant. As a special note, though, remember that the Entry phase is <u>not</u> used to find what works for the child! As soon as the support team feels it has sufficient data, it should move quickly into the **Hypothesis Forming** and **Verifying** phases at which time efforts are directed towards searching for and finding what works.

Resources For Information Gathering

<u>Structured Interviews</u>. The interview process allows the observer to clarify and expand upon the information presented in the Request for Assistance and to gain specific information relevant to the presenting problem(s). Specific questions about the curriculum, instructional procedures and student's performance are included. Effective interpersonal skills are exercised during the interview process to enhance the development of a collaborative relationship. Interactive skills involve asking relevant questions, clarifying, paraphrasing, active listening, perception checking, and offering information. Collectively, interviews help to crystalize the problem identification process and to establish a collaborative relationship.

<u>Systematic Observations</u>. Classroom observations provide a method for collecting data that may or may not substantiate information obtained through an interview or report. Direct observations provide a picture of how students and teachers interact under routine instructional conditions. They also serve as a yardstick for measuring any changes which may occur. The method of observation selected is tied to the purpose of the observation, the type of behavior being observed and recorded, and the available resources.

Naturally, different types of observation and data collection procedures can be employed. The choice, however, should be tailored to the specific situation and the student's presenting problem(s). A variety of observational procedures commonly used include:

Frequency counts--the number of occurrences of a particular behavior.

Percent measures--the number of correct responses relative to the total number of responses.

Duration measures--the total amount of times a student engages in a behavior.

Latency recordings--the time elapsed between an instruction and the student's response to the instruction.

Intensity measures--the degree or magnitude of the behavior.

The type of observation and data collection procedure selected is determined by information gathered during the interview. Before the actual observation it is important to clarify that the information to be gathered is in regard to the specific presenting problem(s), and is **NOT** about the teacher.

Permanent Products. Permanent products are the actual copies of student work. As such, they offer an important assessment dimension. Students often have a remarkable knack for looking very busy or "on task." How well they actually understand and are able to do their work is not evident until their work is examined. This is where the picture of the student as a learner becomes clearer. Often permanent products are included as work specimens in the student's portfolio. An examination of these permanent products allow for an assessment of prior knowledge, thus providing temporary benchmarks of the student's performance.

Record Reviews. This process involves an examination of the records of Level I and II screenings, previous report cards, group achievement and aptitude tests, attendance and health records, cumulative records, and any other evidence that will facilitate problem identification.

Behavioral Performance Inventories and Checklists. Inventories and checklists are other methods of collecting relevant data. Many commercial and teacher made inventories use a checklist format which may yield a quantitative

score or allow for an item by item analysis. Inventories and checklists offer quick and easy methods for gathering information, for gaining initial baseline impressions and for narrowing problems down into specific areas.

Notes to Trainers

Review the various **ENTRY** phase functions to check the accuracy and completeness of participants' notes on **P16**.

The Hypothesis Forming Phase (Overhead 15) (P17)

The Hypothesis Forming phase requires an analysis of the initial data collected followed by an in-depth naturalistic assessment of all areas of concern. This facilitates precise and specific identification of the problem when the team meets to establish an initial trial intervention for the student. The purpose of this phase is to determine the student's prior knowledge and learning needs, and to create an instructional environment which will match the student's needs and skills. This phase begins the systematic search to find what works.

During this second 10 day (maximum) time period, it is expected that team members will have direct contact with the student. They will collect curriculum-based assessment information and attempt instructional strategies. Hypotheses will be formulated regarding avenues and approaches which may work well with the student. At this stage, the classroom and support teacher may have already determined what intervention is needed leaving the role of the team to reach consensus and brainstorm on how best to implement the intervention.

An important transition step, one that is critical to the Hypothesis Forming phase, is an analysis of the learning environment. Knowing how instruction is provided in the classroom and how the student responds to instruction is crucial to the development of an appropriate intervention.

One of the first steps initiated is an instructional assessment. The assessment determines whether the student is functioning at an instructional, frustrational, or independent level in the curriculum. Modifying instruction to meet the student's learning needs is a crucial aspect of instructional support. If the student is performing at a frustrational level, the IST should address ways of resolving the mismatch between the curricular materials and the student's entry skills. If the student is performing at an independent level, more challenging material is needed. If the student is performing at an instructional level, the team should consider the possibility of misidentification or explore the possibility of the student's reacting to other stress factors effecting the learning the environment.

The classroom and support teacher will need to work closely together to determine what the child knows and to establish the child's instructional level relative to his or her peers and to the teacher's expectations. For a favorable analysis to occur, the importance of developing a trusting collaborative relationship between the classroom teacher, the support teacher and the rest of the team members cannot be over emphasized.

Overhead 16 (The Child At-Risk) (P18)

It should also be recognized that this analysis may only represents a portion of what could be contributing to the problem. Overhead 16 shows that the observable behaviors may be only the tip of the iceberg and that under the surface there may be other issues which place the child under greater stress. By looking holistically at the child to determine if there are life stressors that are interfering with school, the team can develop interventions that will simultaneously address all issues that may be impeding the child's ability to perform successfully in school. By teaching appropriate student assistance strategies, observable behaviors may change. This in turn may impact positively on what is causing stress in the child's life.

Activity

Using overhead 16 as a guide, the trainer is to lead a brief discussion of various life stressors which a child in school may encounter. These life stressors are not limited to what occurs during school.

Key Points

Reinforce the importance of looking beyond observable behavior to see if there are other conditions which are placing unusual stress on the child's life. Participants are to take note that they will be receiving specific training in life-skill areas for at-risk youngsters. Assessment of these areas would include: identification of feelings, communication of feelings, self-concept, social interactions and decision making. If there are life stressors impinging upon the child, student assistance strategies should be taught in conjunction with academic and behavioral strategies.

Notes to Trainers

Review the various **HYPOTHESIS FORMING** functions to check the accuracy and completeness of participants' notes of **P16**.

The Verifying Phase (Overhead 17)
(P19)

The third stage or Verifying phase requires the team to set outcome-based goals using the information collect during the Hypothesis Forming phase. Using their expertise, the team generates, evaluates and reaches consensus on the precise strategies to be used in meeting these goals. The strategies which are generated may call for instructional adaptations, more effective interaction patterns, and/or more appropriate student assistance strategies. Following the selection of strategies, the team generates a student intervention plan including measurable outcomes. An action plan is then developed, designating who will be involved with the intervention, when it will occur, and by what methods it will be monitored. By closely monitoring the effects of the intervention for 30 days, the team is able to fine-tune or to change strategies and to substantiate what works and how well it works. The basic goal of this phase of the IST process is to create a learning environment where appropriate instruction is provided and where the student will be successful.

Key Points

The term "verifying" was carefully chosen over the term implementation to represent this phase of the process. Implementation in itself does not necessarily result in improvement. In the past, in fact, individuals who have referred at-risk students have often been content to state that they have tried various forms of intervention with little success. Within the IST process, however, it is the responsibility of the support team to actually determine what works for the student by verifying the appropriateness of the intervention. This process does not suggest that every successful intervention program can be maintained within the existing resources of general education classrooms, even though we would hope that more and more students are successfully maintained there. Of equal importance are the facts that the team knows what is required for the child to be successful and that a a continuum of services is available to support the child within the total school environment.

Notes to Trainers

Review the various **VERIFYING** functions for accuracy and completeness of participants' notes on **P16**.

The Outcome Phase (Overhead 18)
(P19)

The Outcome phase occurs after completion of the 30 day intervention period. At this time, the team must decide whether the strategies used to provide the student with success are within or beyond the scope of the classroom teacher's ability to sustain the program once the support teacher's assistance is phased out. **Rates of Acquisition** and **Retention** are important considerations in arriving at this decision. If the student is making satisfactory improvement within the classroom setting, an action plan is developed identifying what is going to be done and who will do it. If the student is not making progress the team may decide either to redesign the plan or to refer the child for Multidisciplinary Evaluation (MDE). In the latter case, the building principal has the responsibility for making the referral. The principal has a maximum of 10 school days from the end of the 30 day intervention period to process the MDE referral. Appendix C includes the MDE timelines. A copy of the timelines is also available in the appendix of the participant's manual.

Teams will experience situations where all that is needed for certain students is for specific attention to be brought to their problems. They respond immediately and are able to function within the classroom. Teams will also work with students whose progress is not as satisfactory as they would like and who need additional assistance. They will also work with students who struggle excessively in spite of the best efforts of everyone. In this last scenario, the work of the team supports the need for an MDE evaluation.

Key Points

Several key questions need to be addressed with reference to the Outcome phase of the process by members of the Instructional Support Team including:

1. Did the student make acceptable progress during the intervention period?
2. What additional personnel were needed to achieve this progress?
3. What curriculum modifications and adaptations were required to achieve this progress?

4. How much additional time was required for planning and implementing the intervention?

5. Can the array of services available in general education programs be managed to continue the process of instructional support so that the progress made by the student during the intervention can be continued?

6. Does the student require special education services in order to be maintained at an instructional level?

The philosophy espoused within the school building, the backing given to the IST process, the diversity of the building staff and their range of expertise, plus a host of other variables weigh upon the decisions of how best to serve at-risk children. Whether a child can be maintained within a general classroom program or not depends to a great degree upon the flexibility of the building staff and their ability to deal with increasing levels of student diversity. The flexibility and ability of the staff will vary from one school building to another.

Notes to Trainers

Review the various **OUTCOME** functions for accuracy and completeness of Participants' notes of **P16**. Refer participants to the "Phases of the IST Process" in their appendix.

Documentation
(P20)

A certain amount of documentation is required in accordance with the rules, regulations and timelines for implementing IST. While specific student information must be maintained, the IST process is not meant to become inundated with forms nor paperwork. Principals' logs of student's referred, tracking of decisions and intervention strategies from Entry through the Outcome phase, and maintaining actual running records of students performance in folders or portfolios are the types of documentation needed.

Appendix C provides a sample of a format to record a Request for Assistance, and a sample format of a Principal's Log. These samples are also in the participants appendix. In referring to these sample formats, or for that matter to other formats and resource forms, please note that the state does not mandate the use of specific formats or forms but encourages school districts to develop appropriate formats and forms to meet their specific needs.

Summary
(P20)

The functions of IST can be appropriately summarized as a problem-identification and problem-solving process. A good description of what occurs within this process as well as the steps involved in the process can be easily remembered by the word **SOLVE**. Each letter represents a step in the problem-identification and problem-solving process (Enright, 1987; Enright & Beattie, 1992). Think about these steps and see if they do not accurately describe the Instructional Support Team process.

Study the problem	-	**ENTRY**
Organize the facts	-	**HYPOTHESIS FORMING**
Line up a plan		
Verify the plan	-	**VERIFICATION**
Evaluate results	-	**OUTCOMES**

A checklist of activities to be completed during each phase is helpful for teams to monitor their effectiveness. This document is included in Appendix C and in the appendix of the participants' manual.

The IST process receives a certain amount of its strength from its philosophical and conceptual roots. But most of its power comes from the teachers, administrators, psychologists, guidance counselors, specialists, health providers, parents and other key personnel who believe in the process. It is their diligence which make the collaborative problem-identification and problem-solving process work for the benefit of at-risk students.

Activity

As trainers, ask the participants to return to page P7 and complete the section on "What they have learned about IST". Give them time to record their individual responses. After approximately five minute, debrief with the entire group listing their responses and engaging them in a group discussion.

References

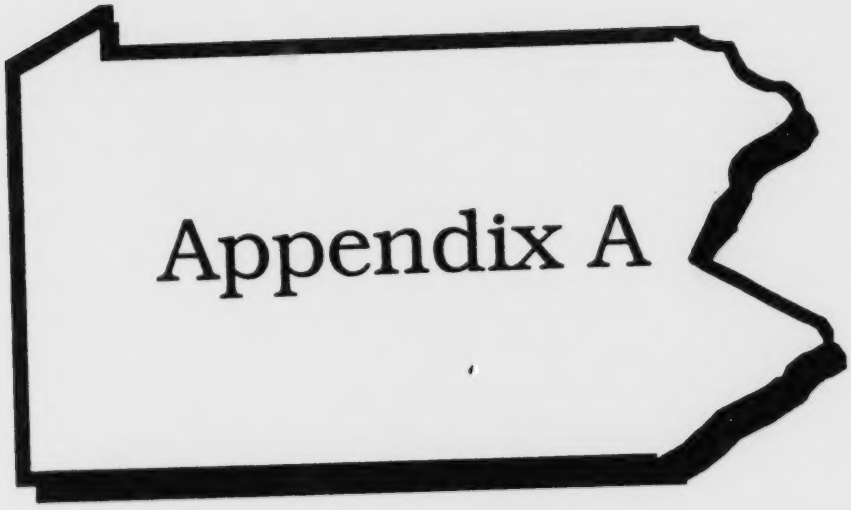
Enright, B. E. (1987). SOLVE: Action problem solving. N. Dillerica, MA: Curriculum Associates, Inc.

Enright, B. E. & Beattie, S. A. (1992). Assessing critical thinking in mathematics, *Diagnostique*, 17(2), 137-144.

Pennsylvania Bulletin, (June 16, 1990), 20(24).

Reynolds, M. C., Wang. M. C., & Walberg, H. J. (1987). The necessary restructuring of special and regular education. *Exceptional Children,* 53(5), 391-398.

Skrtic, T. M. (1987). An organizational analysis of special education reform. *Counterpoint*, 8(2), 15-19.



Appendix A

HISTORY OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT TEAM PROCESS

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT A SHARED VISION

A. Students were at-risk of school failure.

B. The only option was to refer, test and place. Services were provided in pull-out or self-contained settings.

C. The focus was on the student as the problem. Little curriculum adaptation or instructional adjustment existed.

D. An elaborate service delivery system was developed with an an unprecedented array of assessment and itinerant services.

E. Rules regarding general and special education reinforced the practices of : Refer-Test-Place/Pull Out.

F. The Problems:

1. There are many students who need only minor adaptations to curriculum and instruction to progress in general education.

2. A vehicle was needed to help students that is different from the refer, test, place & pull-out system.

3. A delivery system was needed to organize the school's resources based upon the collaborative problem solving process and which focused on students' needs in general classroom settings.

G. Although forms of delivering special education may change, special education will be there for those who truly need it.

I. THE INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT SYSTEM

A. The Instructional Support Mandate:

§ 14.24 (a)(b) Instructional support.

(a) This section does not apply to students who are thought to be gifted, to students beyond the sixth grade who are thought to be eligible, to students attending nonpublic schools who are thought to be exceptional or to young children not yet of kindergarten age or not enrolled in a public school program.

(b) Each school district shall establish a system of instructional support to accomplish the following:

(1) Assure that a continuum of services is available and used effectively in each public school building.

(2) Provide peer support for teachers and other staff members to assist them in working effectively with students under subsection (d).

(3) Provide initial screening and direct intervention for those students prior to referral for a multidisciplinary evaluation under § 14.25 (relating to multidisciplinary evaluation).

(4) Provide services to individual exceptional students if required by the students' IEPs under §§ 14.31 - 14.39 (relating to IEP).

§ 342.24 (a) Instructional support.

(a) Instructional support shall be provided by school districts throughout the State according to a phase-in schedule beginning July 1, 1990 and ending June 30, 1995. A district is not required to fulfill the requirements of this section and § 342.23 (relating to comprehensive screening) prior to receiving the inservice training provided for that purpose by the Department, or prior to receiving validation of the districts' instructional support system. Inservice training in the operation of instructional support services shall be provided by the Department to school districts under a 5 year phase-in schedule. Districts shall receive training or validation prior to June 30, 1995.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Q. What is meant by a continuum of services?

A. § 342.24 (g)(2)(3)

(2) The continuum of services represents an ordered priority from minimal to most intensive level of service. Services shall be deployed according to the following priority determination:

(i) Peer support and exchange for instructional personnel.
(ii) Instructional consultation for school personnel.
(iii) Classroom training for instructional personnel.
(iv) Paraprofessional
(v) Team teacher: for example, additional teacher in the classroom.

(vi) Special teacher.
(A) Part-time: for example, remedial teacher, special education teacher.
(B) Full-time: for example, special education teacher.

(vii) Specialist: for example, therapist.

(3) One or more of the levels of service delivery listed in paragraph (2) may be applied at any location of service delivery.

Q. Who may refer students to IST?

A. § 14.24 (d)

Parents of a student or a member of the professional staff of the student's school may request IST assistance in meeting a student's educational needs.

Q. Define the term identified student

A. A student referred for IST assistance.

§ 342.24 (d)

It is the responsibility of the support teacher to provide instructional support to teachers. The support teacher shall provide instructional support at the direction of the IST and under the supervision of the principal. The purpose of the instructional support provided by the support teacher is to facilitate the screening of students suspected of being eligible for special education services. The support teacher may

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

provide consultation, technical assistance and training to the teachers and parents of identified students. The support teacher may also provide direct instructional services to identified students in regular education environments for the purpose of determining the student's instructional level. The support teacher may not be used to provide services other than those described in this section.

Q. Define the term exceptional student

A. § 14.1 Definitions

Exceptional student - A student who meets one of the following criteria:

(i) An eligible student.

(ii) A student other than an eligible young child who is gifted as set forth in Chapter 342.

(iii) A student receiving special education and related services as a gifted and talented school-aged person under Chapter 13 prior to July 1, 1990.

(vi) A school age child in a detention home.

Q. Define the team eligible student

A. § 14.1 Definitions

Eligible student - An individual of school age who was receiving special education and related services as a handicapped school-aged person under Chapter 13 (Reserved) prior to July 1, 1990, or an individual of school age who meets the criteria in paragraphs (i) and (ii).

(i) The individual has one or more of the following physical or mental disabilities, as set forth in Chapter 342:

(A) Autism/pervasive development disorder.
(B) Serious emotional disturbance.
(C) Neurological impairment.
(D) Deafness/hearing impairment.
(E) Specific learning disability.
(F) Mental retardation.
(G) Multihandicap.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

principal. The purpose of the instructional support provided by the support teacher is to facilitate the screening of students suspected of being eligible for special education services. The support teacher may provide consultation, technical assistance and training to the teachers and parents of identified students. The support teacher may also provide direct instructional services to identified students in regular education environments for the purpose of determining the student's instructional level. The support teacher may not be used to provide services other than those described in this section.

Q. What is the Role of the Instructional Support Team?

A. § 14.24 (c)

Instructional support shall be provided through ISTs designated by the school district. School districts may determine the number and structure of the teams and their methods of operation, within the requirements of this chapter and Chapter 342 (relating to special education services and programs). The IST serving a school building shall be chaired by the principal of that building or by the principal's designee from the professional staff of the building.

§ 342.24 (e)

It is the responsibility of the IST to:

(1) Implement and manage the screening and evaluation process under subsection (f).

(2) Provide instructional support in the student's school to the student and the student's regular classroom teacher.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

C. IST Data Collection:

§ 342.24 (h)

The IST shall maintain minimal data on the operation of the team. The data shall include the following:

(1) The name of the student.
(2) The date of initial concern.
(3) The name of the person expressing concern.
(4) The date of parent contact.
(5) The date and nature of the student-specific action taken by the IST.

D. IST Timelines:

§ 14.24(g)

The following timeline applies to instructional support activities under this section:

(1) The IST shall review a student within 10 school days after a concern has been expressed to the IST by a person qualified to do so under subsection (d). The principal shall record the expression of concern and shall notify the student's parents of the IST review and encourage them to participate.

(IST Participants/Trainers Manual)
ENTRY PHASE:
Request for Assistance
Teacher Interview (parent/student)
Observation(s)
Permanent Products
Records Review
Inventories/Checklists
Parent Notification

(2) Within 10 school days after the IST's review of the student, a modification of the student's instruction shall be implemented in accordance with procedures provided in Chapter 342 unless modification is not needed.

(IST Participants/Trainers Manual)
HYPOTHESIS FORMING PHASE:
(Problem Identification)
Assess needs and knowledge to determine instructional match (based on entry level data collection).

(3) If instructional support activities have produced little or no improvement within 30 school days after their initiation, the IST shall inform the student's principal, who shall refer the student for additional evaluation. Additional evaluation may include formal referral for multidisciplinary evaluation for special education services and programs under §14.25.

(IST Participants/Trainers Manual)
VERIFYING PHASE:
(Intervention Design and Implementation)
Goal Setting
Brainstorming
Implementing
Managing/Supporting
Monitoring

(4) If instructional support activities have produced little or no improvement within 60 school days after their initiation the student shall be formally referred for multidisciplinary evaluation under §14.25.

(IST Participants/Trainers Manual)
OUTCOME PHASE:
Instructional Level:
Rate of Retention
Rate of Acquisition
Degree of Need
Recommended Services
(may include referral for MDE)

(5) Instructional support activities do not serve as a bar to the right of a parent to request at any time, including prior to or during the conduct of instructional support activities, a multidisciplinary evaluation of a child under §14.25(b).

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

II. SCHOOL DISTRICT SCREENING AND EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

A. Comprehensive Screening:

§ 342.23. Comprehensive screening.

The screening activities of a district shall include procedures which lead to intervention by the IST for a student who meets minimum criteria in the following components:

(1) **Level I Screening:** Group-based data. Screening information shall be collected on students from immediately available data sources. The data shall include the following sources: cumulative records, enrollment records, health records and report cards. Refer to Department guidelines for further information

(2) **Level II Screening: Sensory, motor, speech and language screening data.**

(i) Hearing screening shall be conducted as provided for in 28 Pa. Code §§23.5 and 23.6 (relating to hearing screening tests: and threshold hearing tests). A student shall be considered by the IST when that student's hearing screening indicates suspected hearing problems that are not resolved by medical referral.

(ii) Vision screening shall be conducted as provided in 28 Pa. Code §23.4 (relating to vision screening tests). A student shall be considered by the IST when that student's vision screening indicates suspected vision problems that are not resolved by medical referral.

(iii) Motor screening shall be conducted for students about whom there is concern in motor skills. A student shall be considered by the IST when motor screening indicates suspected impairments in motor skills. Motor screening is accomplished through the observation of the student's motor skills by the student's regular and physical education teacher. A student shall be considered for further evaluation by the IST when motor functioning problems are noted in one or more of the following:

(A) Lack of strength, endurance or flexibility.
(B) Difficulty with balance activities.
(C) Failure to show opposition of limbs when walking, sitting or throwing.
(D) Difficulty in crossing the vertical midline.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

(E) Poor sense of body awareness.
(F) Difficulty in remembering motor sequences.

(iv) Speech and language screening shall be conducted for students about whom there is concern in speech and language skills. A student shall be considered by the IST when speech and language screening indicates suspected speech and language impairment. Speech and language screening shall be accomplished by a speech correctionist.

(3) **Level III Screening: IST.** The IST is responsible for and shall implement a screening process which includes, but is not limited to, the following screening activities:

(i) Communicating with the parents concerning their student's needs and abilities and encouraging them to participate in finding ways to meet specified needs.

(ii) Assessing the degree of need for students for whom IST assistance is requested under §14.24 (relating to instructional support).

(iii) Recommending specific instructional support services to meet the needs of students.

(iv) Providing specific instructional support services as recommended.

§ 342.24(f)(g)

(f) The screening and evaluation process shall be the systematic determination of the degree to which a student needs instructional support and special education services and programs. **The degree of need is the student's measured instructional level compared to the functional ability of the regular education program to maintain that level in the student's regular class.** The screening and evaluation process may include the activities of the IST, the MDT and the IEP team. Refer to Department Guidelines for further information.

(g) **Based on the degree of need determined, the IST shall recommend to the principal the services needed to meet the identified need.** The principal of each public school building shall maintain a comprehensive directory of educational services and programs available to students in that building.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

(1) The services and programs may include, but are not limited to, the following:

(i) Student services, including the following:
(A) Health services.
(B) Counseling services.
(C) Library services.

(ii) Instructional support services for instructional personnel, including the following:
(A) Peer support and exchange.
(B) Instructional consultation.
(C) Classroom training.

(iii) Supplementary instructional support services and programs as appropriate within required eligibility, including the following:
(A) Chapter I.
(B) Bilingual education.
(C) Alternative education.
(D) Student assistance program.
(E) Vocational education.
(F) Migrant education.
(G) Special education.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

III. MULTIDISCIPLINARY EVALUATION PROCESS

A. Referral Process:

§ 14.25(c)(d)

(c) A multidisciplinary evaluation shall be initiated if one of the following applies:

(1) A request for evaluation has been made by the student's parents.

(2) The IST determines the student needs a multidisciplinary evaluation.

(3) The IST does not act, or makes no recommendation concerning the student under §14.24 (relating to instructional support).

(4) The student has a sensory impairment or physical or mental disability so severe that supplementary aids and services available without the multidisciplinary evaluation will not sufficiently assist the student to receive an appropriate education.

(5) The student is thought to be gifted, the student is beyond the sixth grade and thought to be eligible, the student attends a nonpublic school and is thought to be exceptional or the young child thought to be eligible is not yet of kindergarten age or not enrolled in a public school program.

(6) A hearing officer or judicial decision orders a multidisciplinary evaluation.

(d) **Except as described in subsections (c)(3)-(5), a school entity may not refer a student enrolled in the regular educational program for a multidisciplinary evaluation unless data required by Chapter 342 have been collected and until the IST has fulfilled its responsibilities as set forth in Chapter 342.**

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Q. How does the IST determine the student needs a multidisciplinary evaluation?

A. Via an Instructional Assessment

§ 342.25 (a)(2)

(a) Referral for multidisciplinary evaluation shall be made when special education referral criteria have been met and are in accordance with § 14.25 (relating to multidisciplinary evaluation). Referral for multidisciplinary evaluation is indicated when the student is suspected of being exceptional and one or more of the following exist:

(2) The instructional assessment of the student experiencing academic difficulty indicates a performance level which is not sufficient to demonstrate success in the regular class without the addition of supplementary aids or services, or both.

§ 342.25 (j)

Evaluation of students suspected of being exceptional and in need of special education services and programs that address academic skills shall include an instructional evaluation consisting of an assessment of the basic academic content that the student is expected to learn, shall yield the student's rate of acquisition and the student's rate of retention and shall result in a determination of the type and quantity of instructional support that is required to maintain the student at the student's instructional level. Refer to Department Guidelines for further information.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

B. The Multidisciplinary Evaluation:

§ 14.25 (g)(j)

(g) The multidisciplinary evaluation shall be sufficient in scope and depth to investigate information relevant to the student's suspected exceptionality, including academic functioning, adaptive behavior, social behavior, learning problems, learning strengths and educational needs and information obtained as a result of instructional support activities, if conducted, and shall be consistent with Chapter 342.

(j) The MDT shall prepare a comprehensive written report which brings together all of the information and findings from the evaluation or reevaluation concerning the student's educational needs and strengths based upon present performance levels, and which includes an interpretation of assessment results and information on observations in the classroom and other settings. The report shall make recommendations as to whether the student is exceptional: shall indicate the bases for those recommendations; and shall provide recommendations for educational program of the student, regardless of whether the student is found to be exceptional. Each team member shall sign the report, indicating whether or not it reflects his conclusions. A team member may submit a separate statement presenting his conclusions if the report does not reflect his conclusions.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

IV. THE IEP PROCESS

§ 14.32 (a)

(a) Each school district shall establish and implement procedures to appoint an IEP team to review the recommendations of the MDT and, if it determines a student is exceptional, to develop an IEP for the student.

A. The IEP Team:

§ 14.32 (c)(d)

Each IEP team shall include persons who meet the following qualifications:

(1) One or both of the student's parents.

(2) The student, if 18 years of age or older, or if the parents choose to have student participate.

(3) A representative of the district, other than the student's teacher, who:

(i) Is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of special education.

(ii) Can ensure that the services specified in the student's IEP will be provided.

(iii) Will serve as the chairperson of the IEP team.

(4) One or more of the student's current teachers. If the student is newly enrolled, a regular education teacher who provides instruction to students of the same age.

(5) The persons who initiated the screening/identification process of the student.

(6) A person who is familiar with placement options of the district.

(7) A member of the IST, if appropriate.

(8) One or more members of the MDT which completed the most recent evaluation (or reevaluation) of the student.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

(9) A person qualified to conduct a diagnostic examination of students if a student is suspected of having a specific learning disability.

(10) Other individuals at the discretion of either the parents or the district.

(d) A single member of IEP team may meet two or more of the qualifications specified in subsection n (c). The team may not consist of fewer than two people besides the parents.

B. The IEP:

§ 342.32 (d)(e)

(d) The IEP shall be based on the comprehensive multidisciplinary evaluation report and shall include the following:

(1) A statement of the student's present levels of educational performance.

(2) A statement of annual goals, including short term instructional objectives.

(3) A statement of specific special education services and programs to be provided to the student, the specific placement and the extent to which the student will be able to participate in regular educational programs.

(4) The projected dates for initiation of services and programs and the anticipated duration of the services and programs.

(5) Appropriate objective criteria, including exit criteria - criteria by which it may be determined that the student is no longer in need of special education services - and evaluation procedures and schedules for determining, on at least an annual basis, whether the short term instructional objectives are being achieved.

(e) The IEP for eligible students 14 years of age and order shall incorporate the educational activities of an ITP. The ITP shall be developed within 90 days after the student's 14th birthday or at the beginning of ninth grade, whichever comes first. The ITP shall:

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

(1) **Establish the student's interests, abilities and aptitudes as well as the results of the instructional evaluation as provided for in § 342.25(i) (relating to multidisciplinary evaluation).**

(2) Define and project desired post-school outcomes as identified by student, parent and IEP team for these areas: community living, employment of postsecondary education/training, or both, and community living.

(3) Specify transition activities in these areas: vocational/career education, work experience, community-referenced and community-based instruction, including specification of:

(i) Sequential activities that support the development of desired post-school outcomes.

(ii) Persons responsible for implementing each activity.

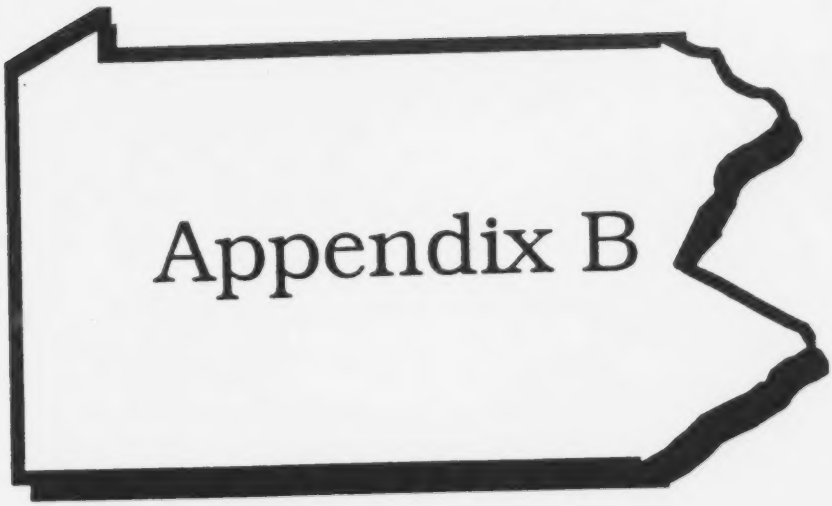
(iii) Support services, such as transportation, case management, vocational counseling and medical services.

(iv) During the student's final school year designate a person or agency responsible for the continuation of transition planning and the formulation of a system to share relevant information.

(4) Specify special education placement as provided in §§ 342.41-342.46 (relating to educational placement).

(5) Be reviewed and revised as necessary in conjunction with the student's IEP.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE



Appendix B

The Role of the Principal in IST

Listed below are the major responsibilities for IST that you will need to carry out in your role as Principal. You will be working closely with the Support Teacher and Team in setting the stage for a successful process in your building. You may find the listed duties do not cover everything that may need to be performed. We recognize the diversity and differences in elementary buildings throughout the state however, this list will give you some guidelines to assist you in the implementation and institutionalization of the process in your building.

1. Attend PDE sponsored Principal's training which takes place prior to the start of the school year.

2. Select a Support Teacher. It is important to select a person with whom the staff is comfortable and who has demonstrated skills necessary to carry out the many functions of the Support Teacher role.

3. Attend all training sessions held by the IST Consultant and participate in guided practice with the Consultant when he/she comes on site.

4. Establish a climate in the building for IST by creating an enthusiastic commitment for the process. The Principal's demonstrated conviction for the IST process will make or break a successful implementation and institutionalization of IST.

5. Hold faculty meetings and publicize the IST effort every chance possible. (A suggested list of ways to do this can be found under the Support Teacher Role.) The Principal, Support Teacher and Team should work together on this effort.

6. Keep the school board, superintendent, parents, the district contact person, and other colleagues informed of the progress of IST in your building. Continuous awareness and positive publicity about IST will be helpful if funding becomes an issue in the future. People will support what they know about, especially if it is helping kids.

7. Attend all team meetings. The Principal or designee chairs the meeting. The active involvement of the Principal is vital and mandated by the Rules and Regulations that govern IST.

8. Keep a Principal's Log on each Request for Assistance to IST. This log will have, at minimum, the name of the student, the date of initial concern, name of person expressing the concern, and the date and the nature of student-specific action taken by the IST , date of parent contact (**entry**). The Support Teacher, in many

cases, is assigned the task of tracking this information. The Principal should have ready access to this information at all times.

9. Attend Principal Network Meetings held by the IST Consultants and/or regional meetings. This is an opportunity to share and receive information with other schools and support from other schools who are starting or have been in the process for one or two years.

10. In conjunction with the Support Teacher and Team, choose regular meeting dates. Initially, you will use these meetings to discuss implementation issues and conduct team building activities. It is critical for the team to work as a team. This takes time and practice. The Principal will be in the best position, as the building leader, to facilitate the team process.

11. Remember, you are not in this alone. Allow the team process to support each member of the team. Your IST Consultant is always available to help and is as close as your telephone. Do not hesitate to call. Your consultant will be in the building at least once a month, more if possible. Make sure you arrange time to meet with him/her for consultation or guided practice.

The Role of The Support Teacher

Welcome to your new position as Support Teacher. You are starting a job that is new to you and to the faculty in your building. It is important that you spend a lot of time initially just gaining information and knowledge about your new role. Since the IST process represents a major change from past practice in dealing with at-risk students, you will need to establish early on that you are not a tutor, remediator, or "pull out" teacher. Your principal can be very helpful in establishing your role and function. (Refer to the list of start-up activities to do as you begin your job and confine your time to those activities. It is important you do not create misconceptions about your role since the rules and regulations clearly define what a Support Teacher may and may not do.)

The IST Consultant assigned to your school will be working closely with you and will be your major source of support. She/he may assign a mentor from an established site who will also be available to collaborate and guide you through the process. Above all, start SLOWLY and lay your groundwork carefully. Remember, "change is a process, not an event." With the IST process, SLOWER IS FASTER!

Once you and the team have decided on how the process might look, you are ready to start taking cases. In the beginning, you may want to confine your request for assistance to students of a few teachers so you can practice and work out any "bugs" before you open the process to the whole faculty. The following list represents a broad range of activities that will be expected of you once you have had the required training.

Responsibilities During the Entry and Hypothesis Phases

1. After receiving a request for assistance, the Support Teacher and the requesting teacher will arrange a meeting to start the process and begin to clarify the problem. At this time, the parent is notified of the process. At the first meeting with the teacher, you will need to clarify and define the IST process and the roles of all the people involved. The process allows 10 days to complete the Entry Phase of the IST process.

2. Start collecting data that will help to further clarify and specifically identify the area(s) of concern. These will include: permanent products, classroom observations, records, interviews, behavioral checklists, life stressors, and curriculum based assessments in all academic areas. The IST will be working closely with the child to determine the instructional needs of the child prior to the team meeting. The process allows 10 days to complete the Hypothesis Forming Phase of the IST process. The above activities may be conducted in concert and shared with various team members as they become familiar and comfortable with the process.

3. Summarize all the data and relevant information collected and distribute to all members of the team prior to the meeting. This will help

abbreviate discussion at the meeting and allow more time to discuss implementation needs. In most cases, the referring teacher and Support Teacher will have determined the problem and set the goals for the child. If it has determined there are coping skill deficiencies, then the team should include those members trained in at-risk strategies.

Responsibilities During the Verifying Stage

4. Present a summary of data collection and clarify areas as requested by the team. Establish goals and outcomes for the student and lead the team through the brainstorming process to identify interventions or ways to implement previously chosen interventions. (The interventions may be continued CBA sessions, instructional adaptations, behavioral strategies, coping skills strategies or effective interaction patterns.)

5. Work directly with the student on the chosen intervention(s) for 30 days. You will work in the child's regular classroom and will involve the classroom teacher as much as possible during this period. If the classroom teacher chooses to do the intervention, then you may need to model techniques, prepare materials or assist as requested. In any case, you will need to monitor frequently during the 30 day period. The goal during this stage is to create an instructional environment in which the student will be successful.

6. Collect data during the 30 days that will demonstrate the student's degree of need. You will need to show his/her ability to acquire and retain material along with the resources and time invested to make progress.

7. The Support Teacher may train others to assist with the selected intervention(s). Parents, teachers, aides, peers as well as other support personnel may be enlisted to work with the student. It is important to spread the work around so you do not become overwhelmed or viewed as "the IST."

Responsibilities During the Outcome Meeting

8. At the end of the 30 day intervention period, convene the team to discuss the outcomes and determine follow-up needs. The Support Teacher in conjunction with the classroom teacher should present the results of the intervention(s) to date.

9. At this meeting, the Team will decide on the effectiveness of the intervention(s). If it is determined the student's needs can be managed in the regular classroom, then they will decide on how to continue the program and who will monitor and provide assistance to the classroom teacher, if needed. If it is determined the student needs specially designed instruction that can only be delivered outside the classroom, then the Principal will refer the child to MDE for further assessment and

determination of program needs. The Support Teacher may become involved in the MDE process since she/he will have valuable information to share.

10. Throughout the 60 day IST process, the Support Team will be responsible for making sure the timelines are followed at all times. A log (Principal Log) will be maintained listing and dating each step of the process. Your IST consultant will give you samples of logs. Many Support Teachers have computerized this process.

General Responsibilities

11. From the very beginning of the job, the Support Teacher should be communicating with teachers. Because it is a new role, it is critical that the Support Teacher not be seen as an administrative assistant, a substitute teacher or tutor. Visits to teachers' classrooms, talking about IST in the faculty room and informally helping with students are ways that will help establish the Support Teacher as a resource for teachers and students and will build a climate of trust and acceptance.

12. After the Support Teacher and Team have been trained in each of the five components, it is their responsibility to find ways to share this information with the faculty. The more the faculty knows and understands the IST process, the greater their comfort level and willingness to participate in the process.

13. There are many ways the Support Teacher and Team can keep the faculty informed. They include but are not limited to the following:

    Newsletters
    Faculty meetings to explain IST
    Grade level meeting to answer questions in small groups
    Published success stories
    Individual meetings with teachers
    Coffee receptions to answer questions or to give periodic updates
    Placing sensitizing materials in the faculty room
    Placing a poster in the faculty room with a problem on it and asking them to suggest interventions
    Publishing an IST manual for their individual building
    Keeping a card catalog of each faculty member's area of expertise to use as a resource
    Developing a mission statement in conjunction with the faculty
    Others (let the imagination flow)

    Keeping the faculty informed and involved from the very beginning is critical. This is a schoolwide program and you must get them to "buy in" if you want success.

14. The Support Teacher and Principal should meet on a regular basis to make sure they are speaking the same language. This is critical as you

begin to work with this process. Since you will be leaving the building periodically for training and networking sessions, it is important your Principal and the faculty understands what you are doing when out of the building.

15. The Support Teacher will be expected to make presentations to the faculty, parent groups, school board and possibly other schools in the district. Once you have a good understanding of the process and components and have applied them, your IST Consultant may call upon you to assist with inservices.

16. The Support Teacher will attend all PDE sponsored training sessions that will be conducted by the IST Consultants assigned to your district. Most of these trainings will take place on-site with your team. Some trainings may take place with other teams. Support Teachers often also meet at least monthly with other Support Teachers to share ideas and receive support.

17. Your IST Consultant will be visiting your building on a regular monthly basis. During these visits, the Consultant will work with you individually, observe, model or consult. Make sure the Consultant has a schedule of your Team meetings so that she/he can observe and participate throughout the year.

18. Your Consultant will be giving you articles, manuals and various materials on the IST process. Read them all and file them in a way that they are readily accessible. You may feel overwhelmed initially and much of it may not be clear to you but as you work through the process and get a feel for the overall picture, it will start to make sense to you and those materials will become valuable resources.

19. At the beginning and end of each year, your school will be asked to submit building information that shows the number of students in the building, the numbers in Special Education classes, and the numbers referred to IST, MDE and placed into special classes. Also, the number of students retained will be submitted. This is one way the state tracks the process. Ideally the numbers of students referred and placed in special classes should be reduced as well as the number of students being retained. It is critical that this information be kept and most of it will be directly taken from your Principal's log.

20. Last but not least, remember you are only one person and you can not do it all. That is why you are part of a team. Enlist their help any way you can. It will encourage that true collaborative process and keep you from becoming overwhelmed with all the responsibilities. Stay positive, keep smiling and remember your IST Consultant is as close as your telephone. Do not hesitate to call upon her/him at any time.

Preliminary Activities for the Support Teacher

During the first few weeks of the Instructional Support Teacher's initial year in his/her new role, drastic changes in routines may create some frustration (especially for a former classroom teacher who is use to following a fixed daily schedule). The following activities represent suggestions that have helped Phase I and Phase II teachers ease into their new role.

1. Distribute a faculty letter to accomplish the following:
   a. dispel concerns involving the change process
   b. outline the responsibilities of the Support Teacher.

2. Complete a needs assessment of your own skills.

3. Become familiar with the district's curriculum:
   a. familiarize yourself with the scope and sequence of the curriculum
   b. acquaint yourself with individual teachers' long term goals or outcome behaviors
   c. find out when and how often various topics or skills are introduced or reviewed.

4. Build rapport with teachers:
   a. conduct interviews with teachers (start with a teacher with whom you feel comfortable, practice good communication skills)
   b. develop a card catalog of information of each teacher's areas of expertise or interest (this information will be helpful during the collaborative consultation process)
   c. offer to prepare and deliver sample or "fun' lessons to get to know the students.

5. Initiate visits to classrooms for the following purposes:
   a. to familiarize yourself with the teaching styles of the faculty members
   b. practice conducting classroom observations of target child
   c. practice curriculum based assessments
   d. practice ADAPTing instruction for target child.

6. Peak teachers' interest level in the IST process:
   a. provide brief articles related to IST, integration etc.
   b. collect additional articles through PRISE search (1-800-441-3215)
   c. prepare faculty newsletter to share salient points of training or success stories throughout the year.

7. Prepare orientation/overview for parents, P.T.O., staff, school board and community (mini presentations, panel discussions, develop awareness packets.)

8. Review the team process and streamline a to adapt to Standards and the climate and culture of your building.

9. Begin sensitizing teachers as to which children may need support:
   a. introduce ideas from PRIM
   b. introduce ADAPT activities
   c. conduct classroom observations.

10. Brainstorm ideas in which to expand your Continuum of Services (in order to facilitate your fade out):
    a. consider peer, cross age tutoring
    b. train volunteer parent aides
    c. conduct parent workshops
    d. encourage cooperative learning.

11. Help develop an ACTION PLAN for your building in order to determine the following:
    a. how will you integrate any existing teams into IST
    b. how will you train and involve the faculty in the five components of training
    c. how will you provide for the "spread of effect" to other buildings in your district?

12. Read! Read! Read! You need to become familiar with the new State Regulations and Standards that drive the IST. You need to read all of the available material on the various components.

13. Be extremely positive about the process. You will be the most important person (along with a supportive principal) to sell this change.

14. Keep smiling and remember that you are part of a team effort. You are not alone. No one expects you to do this job all by yourself:
    a. contact your consultant whenever necessary
    b. share your concerns with other team members during IST meeting "maintenance" time
    c. keep in close contact with other support teachers within your "network"
    d. invite experienced support teachers and faculty members who believe in the process (from Phase I and II buildings) talk to your staff
    c. visit Phase I and II schools and spend time with experienced Support Teachers.

Needs Assessment Survey

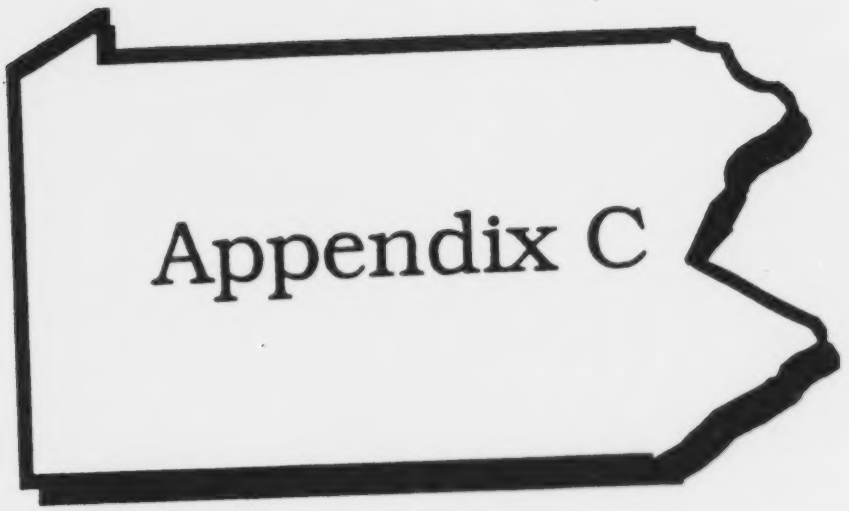
Participant: _____
Building: _____
Date: _____

Complete the following survey indicating your comfort level with the listed topics. Code 1 - No knowledge.
2 - Aware of the topic, but not very familiar with details.
3 - Have read articles and have some comfort with topic.
4 - Have attended workshops, conferences, etc. regarding topic.
5 - High degree of knowledge regarding this topic.

- ☐ ADAPT
- ☐ Behavior Management
- ☐ Cooperative Learning
- ☐ Classroom Management
- ☐ Collaboration/Consultation
- ☐ Computer Literacy
- ☐ Curriculum Based Assessment
- ☐ Effective Communication Patterns
- ☐ Effective Schools
- ☐ Language Experience
- ☐ Learning Strategies
- ☐ Learning Styles
- ☐ Madeline Hunter
- ☐ Reading Strategies
- ☐ RIDE
- ☐ Study Skills Strategies (Metacognition)
- ☐ Systematic Observation Systems
- ☐ Test-Taking Strategies (Memory)
- ☐ Whole Language
- ☐ Writing Process

Other:

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____


Appendix C

MDE TIMELINES

Referral to Placement Process

MULTIDISPLINARY EVALUATION
22 PA Code 14.25

1. Permission to evaluate form sent to parents. Multidisciplinary evaluation shall be completed and disseminated within 60 school days.

2. The date of parental permission begins the 60 school day period for the multidisciplinary evaluation completion.

3. The evaluation shall be completed within 45 school days after receiving parental permission for an initial evaluation.

4. An evaluation report shall be completed within 10 school days after completion of the multidisciplinary evaluation.

5. A copy of the evaluation report shall be delivered to the parents, and a summary of the content of the report shall be effectively communicated to the parents within 5 school days after its completion.

6. A 30 day extension may be requested only under unusual circumstances. Extension must be requested at least 10 days prior to the end of the 60 day period.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM
(22 PA Code 14.32)

7. The IEP shall be developed within 20 school days after issuance of an MDT's evaluation report, but no sooner then 10 days. (Parents may choose to waive the 10 day period between the MDE and the IEP).

8. The IEP shall be implemented as soon as possible, but no later than 10 days after the completion of the IEP.

9. NORA is to be signed after the development of IEP. The IEP team meetings shall be convene at least annually, or more frequently if conditions warrant.

PLACEMENT
(22 PA Code 14.42)

10. Starting date of services must be stated in the IEP, but no later than 10 days after the completion of IEP.

SAMPLE

Entry

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT TEAM

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE

Student: _____ D.O.B.: _____ Date: _____

Parent Name: _____ Phone: _____ Address: _____

_____

Referral Source: _____ Teacher: _____ Grade: _____

Check area(s) of general concern: ____Academic ____Behavior
____At-Risk ____Speech

■ Check support student currently receives:

____ Tutoring
____ Chapter 1
____ Special Education
____ Speech
____ Guidance Counseling
____ ESOL
____ Private Tutoring/Private Counseling

Reading Level: _____

Math Level: _____

■ Describe what you would like the student <u>to be able to do</u> that he/she does not presently do? *(Attach documentation if available).*

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Did parent request a conference? ____ yes ____ no

SAMPLE

Instructional Support Team - Principal's Log

Student's Name	Date of Initial Concern	Referral Souce (Name of Person Expressing Concern)	Date of Parent Contact	Date and Nature of Student-Specific Action Taken by IST

Team Reflections on the Process

"A Systematic Search for What Works"

IST Checklist

	Yes	No	Implications
ENTRY			
1. Was the Request for Assistance clearly articulated?	☐	☐	
2. Were appropriate inventories completed (behavior, SAP, etc.)	☐	☐	
3. Were student/teacher/parent inventories completed?	☐	☐	
4. Were permanent records reviewed?	☐	☐	
5. Were permanent products examined?	☐	☐	
6. Were parents notified of request for assistance and invited to participate in the process?	☐	☐	
HYPOTHESIS FORMING (problem identification)			
1. Was the child's prior knowledge assessed?	☐	☐	
2. Was the instructional expectation indicated?	☐	☐	
3. Have the child's need(s) been determined and the mismatch(es) noted?	☐	☐	
4. Have the appropriate avenues and approaches been attempted and documented?	☐	☐	
VERIFYING (intervention design and implementation)			
1. Were the goals clearly stated in 30 day measurable outcomes?	☐	☐	
2. Were methods of collaborative problem solving employed when designing an intervention?:			
- identifying the problem	☐	☐	
- clarifying the goal	☐	☐	
- brainstorming	☐	☐	
- selecting strategies based on decision making criteria	☐	☐	

3. Was the instructional assessment on-going in order to continually fine tune the assessment/intervention? ☐ ☐

4. Were the materials/people/etc. prepared or listed for the intervention? ☐ ☐

5. Was a management system designed to support the intervention? ☐ ☐

6. Was a monitoring system designed to facilitate the intervention and fade of support? ☐ ☐

OUTCOME **(follow-up evaluation)**

1. Was progress determined (acquisition/retention)? ☐ ☐

2. Were the interventions successful? ☐ ☐

3. Are there additional issues that need to be address through the IST? ☐ ☐

4. Was the degree of need reviewed? ☐ ☐

5. Will a MDE be required? ☐ ☐

6. Were the parents involved/informed of the progress? ☐ ☐

COMMENTS:

Part III

HOW IST FUNCTIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Objectives

1. To describe the relationship between the philosophy of instructional support and the delivery of specially designed instruction for students with disabilities in general education classroom settings.

2. To examine the relationship between IST and specially designed instruction in terms of a "continuum" of services.

3. To clarify the roles of the IST relative to individual support teams for students with disabilities who are included in general education settings.

A Shared Philosophy: Approaches to Support Students with Diverse Needs in the General Education Setting

Instructional support and special education are two intervention models designed to provide educational supports that enhance an individual student's ability to learn successfully. Before discussing the relationship between these two models in practice, it is helpful to summarize briefly the rationale and philosophical basis upon which each model of support is built.

Instructional Support. In its most narrow interpretation, IST functions as a prereferral intervention model (see Graden, Casey & Christenson, 1985). These models are designed to provide the necessary supports and expertise to enable "at risk" students to experience greater academic success while remaining in the general education classroom. Assessment, problem-solving, and the development of instructional intervention plans focus on the match between the academic environment of the classroom and an individual student's learning needs. The intended outcome of the IST process is to develop strategies and accommodations that bridge existing gaps between the current instructional environment and the needs of an individual student.

From an individual building, classroom, and teacher perspective, investing resources in a responsive and active Instructional Support Team has long-term educational benefits that extend to *all* students in the general education classroom. Over time, teacher collaboration and involvement in the implementation of instructional adaptations developed through the IST process is likely to increase the capacity of individual classroom teachers to alter instruction to accommodate student needs. In other words, the IST process provides a vehicle through which individual teachers and support personnel expand their expertise by participating in a collaborative problem-solving forum about student-specific issues that are meaningful to them. In the course of developing effective interventions for individual learners, the knowledge base of the team and each of its individual members is increased. Other students become beneficiaries of this expanded knowledge and experiential base.

Special Education. Special education services are available to students who have identified disabilities that create challenges to learning. As required by law, Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are developed after a comprehensive multidisciplinary evaluation, designed to identify current levels of performance and individual needs, is completed. These plans identify individual learner goals as well as the type and intensity of support services necessary to assist the learner in achieving these goals. The intent of this sequence of activities is to identify and consider the unique needs of a learner *independent* of a particular program placement. Only after individual needs are identified and prioritized does the issue of placement become a legitimate topic of discussion. When placement is being considered, the law is clear that multidisciplinary evaluation teams must *first* consider whether a student's individual needs can be addressed in a general education classroom with the use of supplemental services and supports *before* recommending any placement that removes the student from the general education environment.

IST and Special Education: A Comparison of Implementation Practices

IST and special education share a focus on responding to individual needs as a means of promoting academic and social growth. The way in which this occurs, however, differs when each model is implemented separately. Table 1 provides a comparison between the practices characteristic of IST and special education. A look at both the similarities and the differences will provide a basis for considering how, in practice, these models interface.

Examining the "Continuum": IST Should Not End Where Special Education Begins

The comparison above clearly illustrates a commonality in *what* is done to support students in IST and special education programs. Differences are evident, however, in exactly *how, what, where,* and *to what extent* these supports are provided. In spirit, IST and special education share a focus on the general education classroom as the context in which supports are provided. In practice, however, this does not characterize all special education programs, nor is IST pursued with equal fidelity everywhere. This situation is illustrated by the extreme variability across districts within Pennsylvania and across the country, and by the proportion of students with similar disability classifications who are educated in regular class vs. special class or special school settings (see Danielson & Bellamy, 1989; Blackman, 1989). It is difficult to discredit the interpretation that factors unrelated to the characteristics and needs of students (e.g., number of identified students, availability of alternative programs, experience/skill in implementing supports in general education settings) influence the type of educational placements in which students are served (Danielson & Bellamy, 1989).

The difficulty encountered in operationalizing two concepts - the least restrictive environment (LRE), and the continuum of services, helps to explain this variability. In an effort to ensure that students with disabilities are educated in the *least restrictive environment*, federal and state special education law require that a "*continuum of alternative placements* [be] available to meet the needs of handicapped children for special education and related services" (Federal Register, 1977, p. 42497). This language has reinforced a mode of thinking that directly links services to settings. In this framework, the least restrictive environment equals the general education classroom. If a student is not successful in the general education classroom, s/he is placed in a "more restrictive" pull-out program or self-contained special education classroom in order to receive specially designed instruction. In his critique of the "continuum" concept, as it has come to be known, Taylor (1988) writes:

> ...most restrictive placements are also the most segregated and offer the most intensive services; least restrictive placements are the most integrated and independent and offer the least intensive services (p. 43).

Similar practices occur within general education, where specialized support programs (e.g., Chapter 1, bilingual education) are frequently available to students only through pull-out models, because these services are viewed as either not available or not possible to deliver within the general education classroom.

Within this framework, it is natural to view IST as the first step in an ordered array of services, since it is focused on maintaining a student who is not currently experiencing success within the general education classroom. In such a paradigm,

IST is tried, and if fails to work, special education moves in to respond to the problems with more "specialized" approaches. Thus, IST is viewed as ending where special education begins. This sequential thinking reinforces the major problem associated with the concept of the least restrictive environment: **the LRE principle confuses segregation and integration on the one hand with intensity of services on the other.**

Current thinking, reinforced by a series of federal court decisions, separates the issue of service intensity from that of service location. Within this framework, a variety of supports are available in an array of placements. Supports, services, and the way in which they are provided are driven by student need and instructional circumstances rather than the location of a placement. Within this context, the relationship between programs designed to provide instructional support, and those developed to provide special education services in inclusive settings, need to be reconsidered.

From Philosophy to Practice: The IST/Special Education Interface

There are two scenarios that describe the circumstances under which IST and special education programs most commonly interface in schools. The first occurs when the IST process plays itself out, and short-term interventions in the general education classroom are insufficient to bridge the gap between a student's needs and the instructional delivery of the general education classroom. This situation triggers a referral for a multidisciplinary evaluation. The second scenario takes into account the supports that the IST may provide to students identified as exceptional who are in general education classrooms.

IST-Initiated Referrals to Special Education

The fact that a student may ultimately be referred to and found in need of special education services at the end of the IST process does not necessarily mean a removal of that student from the general education classroom. Rather, it suggests a mismatch between the student's learning needs and the existing resources and structure of the general education classroom. In some cases, the IST process may identify the instructional environment necessary for success, but the resources necessary to maintain these circumstances are beyond those that can be provided by general education alone. Special education represents a source of supplemental service and supports for eligible students that, unlike IST, is not time limited. As reflected in the LRE requirement of federal and state law, these resources can and should be focused on enabling a student to benefit from the educational environment of the general education classroom. Occasionally, the IST process may not result in the identification of the necessary conditions for learning. Additional expertise/specialists as part of the MDE may be needed to identify the necessary instructional conditions for successful learning.

IST and Exceptional Students in the General Ed Classroom

Students who are labeled exceptional and are found to be eligible for special education have been found to need some type of specially designed instruction in order to learn. In many situations, these supports can be provided to students in the context of the general education classroom, with the use of supplementary aides and services. In the past, this approach has been common only for students whose needs for support were limited, and whose instructional goals were the same or only slightly different than those of the rest of the students (i.e., *mainstreaming*). More recently, educators have developed a technology of support that enables students with a wide array of abilities to be successfully accommodated within the general education classroom. An *inclusive* approach to education necessitates new roles and responsibilities for both general and special education teaching staff, and a recognition that intensity of service is a variable independent of location and placement.

Planning an educational program for an eligible student during the IEP process should feature a consideration of how his/her needs might be accommodated in a general education classroom. In designing this program, the ongoing involvement of the Instructional Support Team should be articulated. As indicated in Section 14,24(b)(4) of the Special Education Regulations, IST services can be used for students who are enrolled in special education programs. That section indicates that IST can be utilized to "...Provide services to individual exceptional students if required by the students' IEPs...". The steps that describe this planning process and the *potential* involvement of the IST team members are detailed in Table 2. This discussion is based on the premise that there is a logical area of expertise and/or instructional responsibility that justifies the regular educator's involvement when the Individual Support Team is used to support the inclusion of the eligible student. This discussion is also based on the assumption that there is likely to be overlapping membership between the IEP team and the IST in most situations.

The IST structure, personnel, and the building-based orientation toward looking for solutions to accommodate individual learners represent important contextual variables when developing support plans for students with disabilities who are included in the general education classroom. Like the IST support teacher who examines environmental variables and existing resources to determine how to bridge gaps between an individual student's learning needs and the instructional environment, the IEP team draws upon and uses the resources available within the school to provide the necessary supports to enable a student identified as exceptional to succeed in the general education classroom. IST expertise and resources represent one potential source of support for eligible students within the general education classroom. Resources available through special education funding represent another. Thus, the special education student, when served in an inclusive setting, brings to the general education classroom those specialized services and resources reflected in his/her IEP. In using these resources to create an instructional match between the general education classroom and the needs of the student, it is clear that

other students in the class can also benefit from the availability of additional supports within the classroom triggered by the presence of a student with a disability.

When eligible students are included in regular classes, the Instructional Support Team can assist the regular class teacher in making accommodations that will help the student to succeed in the regular class environment. The team can also plan for regular education supportive services that will help the teacher meet the student's needs. There is not a prescribed formula that precisely distinguishes where the work of special educators and general educators begin and end. However, while the support teacher may provide consultation to the inclusion process (see Table 2), s/he may not serve as an in-class teacher or tutor for the eligible students. Rather, the service to these students is provided by the Instructional Support Team through the regular education continuum of services. Of course, the support teacher, as a member of the IST should facilitate, and not inhibit, the appropriate and effective connections between the student's regular and special program teachers. Special educators have always served as consultants to regular class teachers for their included students, and these relationships should be encouraged. Beyond this restriction, the team structures developed to guide the instructional planning and support processes associated with both IST and inclusive program placements empower its team members to make decisions about roles and responsibilities that are equitable, instructionally responsible, congruent with an identified student's IEP, and likely to yield educational benefits.

The old adage that the whole is greater than the sum of its separate parts is an apt observation about IST and inclusion initiatives. While each can and does operate separately in buildings throughout Pennsylvania, they have the potential to become much more than two distinct "initiatives" when the rationale and intent behind each is blended and integrated within the general approach to education that is adopted by a building. In other words, when seen as separate initiatives, each is limited in scope to a specific group of students for whom traditional classroom practices often present instructional challenges. As general educators become involved in designing and implementing instructional accommodations for a wider array of students with different needs and abilities, the inherent variability within the entire classroom, rather than the needs of just one or two who are "different," becomes the focus of the teaching team. When this perspective occurs, the shared expertise available through a wider variety of professionals focused on the general education instructional environment can truly be channeled to benefit *all* students.

Conclusions

As seamless systems of support for all students are developed in schools, the need to maintain rigid distinctions between different teams designed to provide unique functions may diminish. Rather, a perspective may evolve that the school faculty, administrator and parents join a various times to perform specific activities that are needed to support the student. In this scenario, the faculty and parents provide

instructional support as an umbrella term to all students. Some may receive instructional support for as short period as a pre-referral procedure, while others are assisted over longer periods, as is the case with eligible students.

Facilitating this blending of teams is the fact that these different functions have similar philosophies and operating procedures. For example, both pre-referral and inclusion functions make ample use of the problem-solving process, instructional assessment, and instructional adaptations. For this reason, training in these functions can often be coordinated by various training groups (e.g., IST and GATEWAYS) so that school faculties see these as generic effective practices that are used for different functions rather than as distinctively different entities. For example, one instructional adaptations training may address classroom accomodations during pre-referral intervention and inclusion. In coordinating training in this way, consultants may need to "step out of role" in order to model collaboration and program coherence for their trainees.

References

Blackman, H. P. (1989). Special education placement: Is it what you know or where you live? Exceptional Children, 55, 459-462.

Danielson, L. C., & Bellamy, T. G. (1989). State variation in placement of children with handicaps in segregated environments. Exceptional Children, 55, 448-455.

Graden, J. L., Casey, A., & Christenson, S. L. (1985). Implementing a prereferral intervention system: Part I. The model. Exceptional Children, 51, 377-384.

Taylor, S. J. (1988). Caught in the continuum: A critical analysis of the principle of the least restrictive environment. Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, 13, 41-53.

PART IV

THE USE OF COACHING AND GUIDED PRACTICE IN INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT TRAINING

THE USE OF COACHING AND GUIDED PRACTICE IN INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT TRAINING

Overhead 1 (Traditional Staff Development)

Traditional staff development for teachers has been found to be ineffective, with teachers who have participated in training remaining unchanged. They often attend "set and get" workshops in which they are passive recipients of "out of town" expertise. These "one-shot" training sessions, accompanied by little or no follow-up, do not give teachers the opportunity to apply newly learned skills in the classroom . Weak training designs often overemphasize theory, while providing little in the way of practical application. Bernal and Torres (1990) describe current staff development efforts as "content rich and process poor" because training approaches do not encourage classroom use of new skills or give teachers time to experiment with new strategies. Therefore, many training manuals are left to gather dust on the shelf and many teachers continue to maintain the status quo.

Activity

Ask participants the following:

1. How many staff development sessions have you attended in the last two years?
2. Of that number, how many times have you been given the opportunity to fully master the new skills and apply them effectively in your classroom?

Key Points

The trainer is to acknowledge that traditional staff development for teachers is not always designed effectively. Reinforce the fact that IST training is a statewide teacher training effort which is designed very differently from traditional in-service approaches and which is based on the research on effective approaches to staff development.

Overhead 2 (Teachers Can Be Wonderful Learners)

Research tells us that teachers can be wonderful learners. They can implement a new curricula and master new teaching strategies, if training is provided under the appropriate conditions. Those who criticize teachers' motivation or ability to learn and change their behavior have misconceptions about the principles of staff development. Joyce and Showers (1983) believe that "teachers have been undersold as learners simply because inadequate training has been provided" (p. 2).

Overhead 3 (Quote on Adaptation)

It is critical to the field of education that "teachers can be wonderful learners." Because the classroom environment is constantly changing, it is essential that teachers be able to continually adapt and change their teaching behaviors.

Activity

Ask participants the following:

1. What do you think this quote means?
2. Why do you think that growth and change are so critical to the field of teaching?
3. How have educators adapted in order to meet the needs of students at-risk?

Overhead 4 (Goals of Staff Development)

Although school improvement is the primary goal of staff development, people improvement is necessary for school improvement to take place. It is the people in schools who must change if schools are to facilitate the learning of all children. Therefore, the focus of staff development should be on changing instructional strategies, rather than on changing students. However, the effectiveness of staff development should be determined by the improvements that students are able to make. The effectiveness of IST training will be determined by the improvements that students who receive instructional support are able to make in the regular classroom.

The second goal of staff development is to increase student learning. Educators now know what teaching strategies can be used to assist average students in achieving what only the top ten percent of students normally achieve. They also know that students in the lower quartiles can make comparable gains (Bernal & Torres, 1990). In 1990, Dr. James A. Tucker, the former director of the Bureau of Special Education in Pennsylvania, stated that "It is not necessary to fund further research on what works. We know what works. It is time to do it" (p. 13).

A third goal of staff development is to foster collegial interaction and collaboration among teachers. This collaboration can assist teachers in the transfer of new skills to the classroom.

Key Points

Trainers may wish to emphasize that the IST initiative and training addresses all three of the goals of staff development. Therefore, it goes far beyond simply meeting the needs of students.

Overhead 5 (Effective Approaches to Staff Development)

Activity

PRIOR to showing this transparency, trainers may wish to ask participants to consider the following:

Think back to the "best" in-service session that you have ever attended.

1. Why do you consider this in-service session the "best" that you have ever attended?
2. What words can you use to describe effective in-service training?

Research indicates that teachers prefer in-service sessions which are personally relevant and which help to meet their needs within the classroom (Holly, 1982). Although it is important to provide teachers with the theoretical background underlying new strategies so that they have a conceptual understanding, it is also important to design staff development programs which are practical and concrete.

Because traditional staff development programs are often "one-shot" sessions, teachers frequently do not get the opportunity to share what works for them and what they have learned, to experiment with newly learned strategies, and to change their teaching behaviors. In addition, teachers rarely have a professional within the school who is able to provide "on-call assistance" and follow-up within the classroom.

Classroom teachers from three rural school districts in Western Pennsylvania were interviewed about their IST training in September of 1994. They stated that their IST training was different from other in-service training in that it was practical and applicable to the classroom. Most of these teachers attended several days of training and were provided with the "on-call assistance" of the support teacher or Instructional Support Consultant.

Overhead 6 (Components of Effective Staff Development)

Joyce and Showers (1980) have researched the components of staff development which have been found to be the most effective. They have included all of these components in their model of staff development. If teachers are provided with modeling, practice, feedback, and direct coaching, the majority of them will be able to transfer new learning to their classroom. If follow-up, in the form of coaching, is not provided, approximately 90% of training is lost and is never transferred to the classroom.

Activity

Ask participants the following:

1. Why do you think that coaching and follow-up are so critical in effective teacher training?

Overhead 7 (Executive Control)

The goal of an effective training design is for teachers to develop "executive control" of the new skills. It means much more than simply developing observable skills. Teachers need assistance in developing the thought processes which are necessary to modify strategies to meet the needs of their unique learners and then to evaluate their impact. If teachers do not think conceptually about what they are taught, and how and why the new strategies are important, they are unable to transfer the new skills to their classrooms in an effective manner.

Overhead 8 (Importance of Overlearning)

In order to minimize the amount of learning that has to take place during the transfer of a new skill to the classroom, simulated practice is necessary. Simulated practice allows teachers to practice in situations which closely approximate the conditions of the classroom. If teachers overlearn (continue practicing the skill after the level when acceptable performance is achieved), the transfer of the skill from the training site to the classroom will be an easier one. Simulations and actual work with students will occur as a part of IST training.

Sustained practice is also necessary for the mastery and transfer of new skills. Showers, Joyce, and Bennett (1987) state that teachers need about 25 teaching episodes during which the new strategy is used before they are able to fully transfer the strategy.

Because teaching often takes place in very confusing and active settings, it is important for teachers to reach automaticity in their performance of new skills. Bloom (1986) states that "the mastery of any skill depends on the ability to perform it unconsciously with speed and accuracy while consciously carrying on other brain functions" (p. 70). Overlearning is necessary for teachers who want to reach automaticity of new IST strategies.

Activity

Ask participants the following:

1. What teaching behaviors do you perform automatically within the classroom?
2. How long did it take you to reach automaticity in those behaviors?
3. What assisted you in reaching automaticity?
4. Are there other teaching techniques which you have attempted to master, but did not? Was the failure to reach automaticity a factor in your inability to master these techniques?

Overhead 9 (The Discomfort of Effective Training)

There is a certain amount of discomfort associated with change and the learning of new skills. Learning new skills requires greater effort than simply continuing to use the old ones. Teachers cannot expect to achieve executive control of new skills during initial training sessions. Therefore, teachers often feel awkward and uncomfortable in their attempts to learn new skills, which results in unpleasurable practice. If teachers do not realize that this discomfort is normal and an expected part of the training sequence, they may avoid practice or develop a resistance to training.

Activity

Ask participants the following:

1. How are teachers and students similar in their reactions to change and the learning of new skills?
2. What do you as teachers do to assist students through this change process?
3. What can IST consultants and support teachers do to assist teachers through the change process?

Overhead 10 (Quote on Practice)

Teachers who need the most practice in the learning of new skills will experience the most discomfort from the change process. Therefore, those teachers who most need to change their teaching behaviors in order to facilitate the learning of all children will be the ones who avoid practice and resist training.

Overhead 11 (The Problem of Transfer)

Activity

Ask participants to answer true or false to the statement on transfer and to justify their responses. Then share the correct response and the reasoning the follows.

Teachers have to handle a multitude of problems and situations throughout their day. Even if excellent training has been provided, it is difficult for teachers to get the on-the-job training that they need under sometimes difficult circumstances. Teachers must be able to decide on the appropriateness of strategies and adjust them to meet the needs of their students, and will only be able to do so with assistance and follow-up. Joyce and Showers (1980) discuss the importance of follow-up by stating:

> If the theory of a new approach is well presented, the approach is demonstrated, practice is provided under simulated conditions with careful and consistent feedback, and that practice is followed by application in the classroom with coaching and further feedback, it is likely that the vast majority of teachers will be able to expand their repertoire to the point where they can utilize a wide variety of approaches to teaching and curriculum. If any of these components are left out, the impact of training will be weakened in the sense that fewer numbers of people will progress to the transfer level (which is the only level that has significant meaning for school improvement) (p. 384).

In the Instructional Support initiative, assistance and coaching in the classroom are provided by the support teacher.

Overhead 12 (The Definition of Coaching)

The primary purpose of the coaching which is provided by the support teacher is for teachers to utilize IST training and strategies to the extent that we are able to note their effects on students. Coaching allows teachers to work collaboratively, to reflect on their instruction, and to utilize a shared language. Coaching should begin immediately after training has occurred, allowing the support teacher and classroom teacher to experiment with the new strategies and to determine their impact on students.

Overhead 13 (The Value of Coaching)

Of the five essential training elements (refer to overhead 6), the coaching element is viewed by researchers as the most important. Coaching allows for consistent classroom follow-up and provides teachers with the guided practice which is essential of the transfer of new skills. As the skill levels of the teachers increase, the coaching gradually moves to a cognitive focus. The support teacher and classroom teacher act as collaborative problem-solvers, by exploring and analyzing the effects of new strategies.

Overhead 14 (The Benefits of Coaching)

In identical training sessions, coached teachers practice new strategies more frequently, attained greater skill levels, and used strategies more effectively with students. Coached teachers were more willing to experiment with new strategies and were more likely to teach the new strategies to their students. Coached teachers also remembered and used their strategies for longer periods of time and possessed a more thorough understanding of the strategies which they were using (Joyce & Showers, 1988). Therefore, the coaching which is provided by support teachers can greatly facilitate the transfer of IST training and strategies to the classroom.

Overhead 15 (The Process of Coaching)

The coaching process has four major functions. First, coaching allows the support teacher and classroom teacher to collaborate throughout a difficult learning process. This companionship allows teachers to check perceptions, share frustrations and successes, and watch each other try out new strategies. The companionship provided by the support teacher not only makes it easier to learn new strategies, but it also makes it a more pleasurable experience. Teachers need to feel good about themselves and their skills during their first practice sessions with students. Second, the coaching process allows the support teacher to assist with guided practice and give feedback to classroom teachers as they continue their practice in the classroom. This practice helps the classroom teacher to work through problem areas and reach automaticity. Third, coaching assists teachers in their selection of strategies and gives close attention to the appropriateness of their use. Fourth, the coaching process allows classroom teachers, with the assistance of the support teacher, to adapt new strategies to meet the needs of different students. The support teacher is able to focus on the behavior of the student and the impact of the strategy on the student, while the classroom teacher continues to perfect the mechanics of the strategy.

References

Bernal, J., & Torres, M. (1990, March). Successful classrooms strategies for students at risk begin with effective inservice training. Paper presented at the Rural Education Symposium of the American Council on Rural Special Education and the National Rural and Small Schools Consortium: Tucson, AZ. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 337 306)

Bloom, B. (1986). The hands and feet of genius: Automaticity. Educational Leadership, 43, (5), p. 70-77.

Desmarias, J. (1992). Teachers' opinions of the characteristics of good inservice programs as suggested in current research. La Grange School District 105, IL: Author. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 354 592)

Holly, M. (1982). Teachers' views on inservice training. Phi Delta Kappan, 63, (6), 417-418.

Joyce, B., & Showers, B. (1980). Improving inservice training. The messages of research. Educational Leadership, 37, (5), 379-385.

Joyce, B., & Showers, B. (1982). The coaching of teaching. Educational Leadership, 40, (1), 4-10.

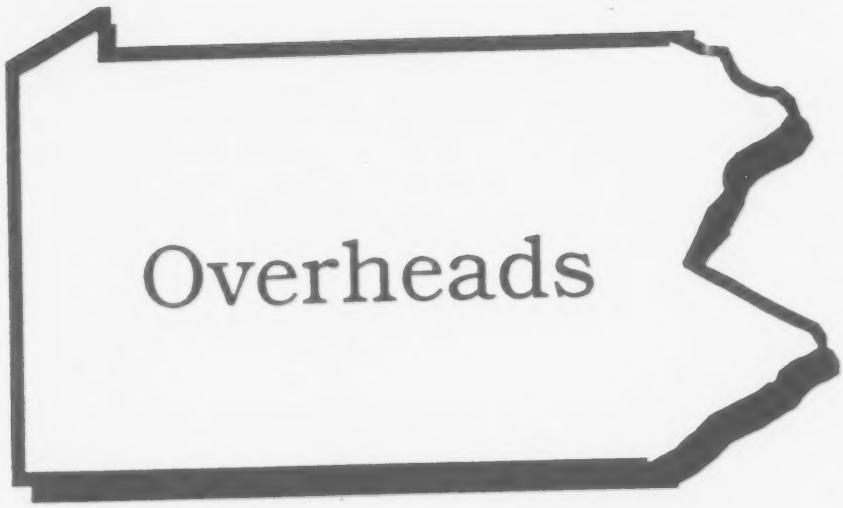
Joyce, B., & Showers, B. (1983). Power in staff development through research on training. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Joyce, B., & Showers, B. (1988). Student achievement through staff development. White Plains, NY: Longman, Inc. Showers, B. (1985). Teachers coaching teachers. Educational Leadership, 42, (7), 43-48.

Showers, B., Joyce, B., & Bennett, B. (1987). Synthesis of research on staff development: A framework for future study and a state-of-the-art analysis. Educational Leadership, 45, (3), 77-87.

Sparks, D. (1994, March 16). A paradigm shift in staff development. Education Week, p. 42.

Tucker, J.A. (1991, December 12). Focus on special education: Yesterday, today, and tomorrow. A paper presented at the Annual Conference of the California School Boards Association, San Francisco, CA.


Overheads

TRADITIONAL APPROACHES

REGULAR SYSTEM/SPECIAL SYSTEM

POSITIVE OUTCOMES

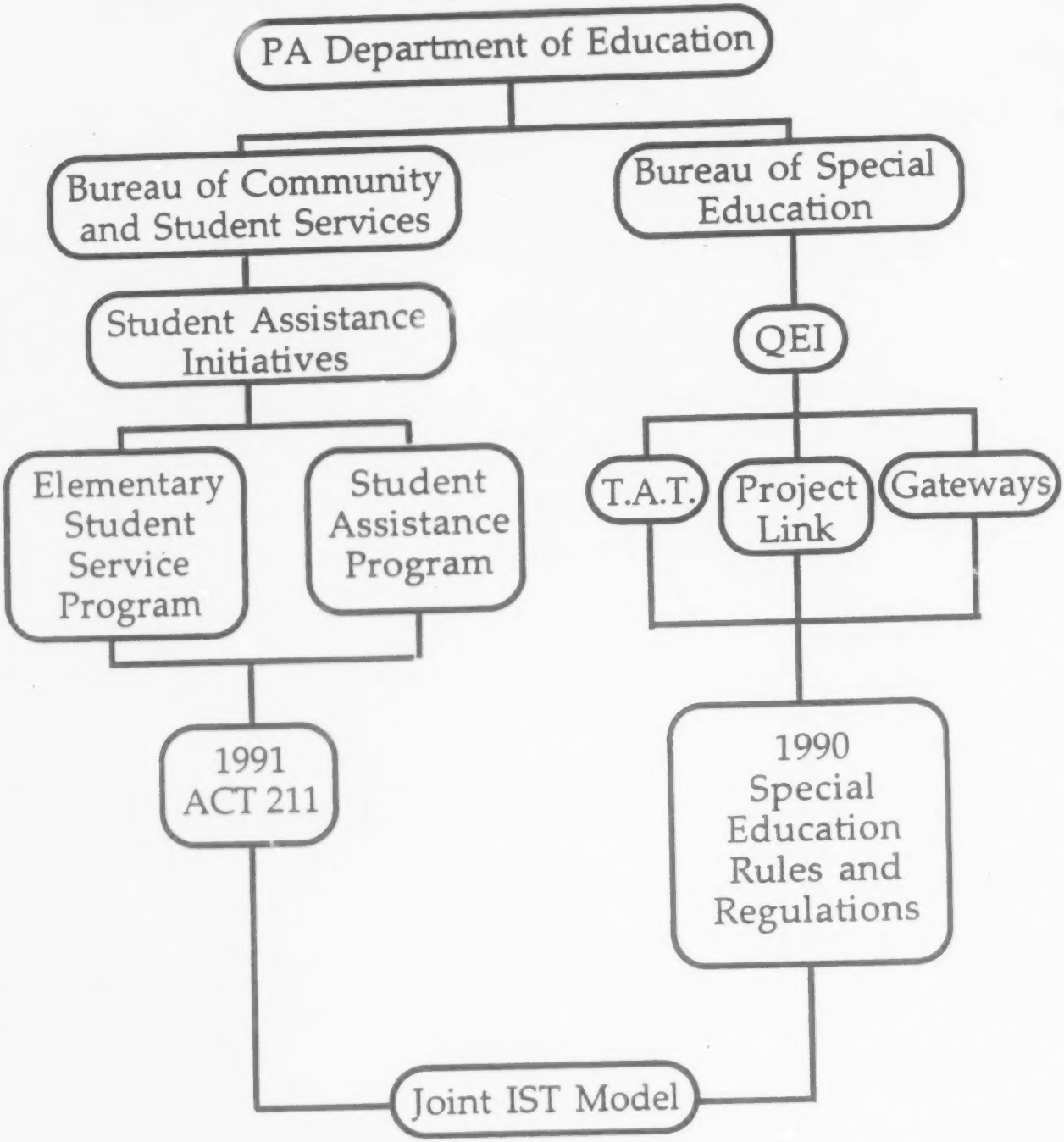
Access, eligibility, due process
Education for ALL
Individualization
Smaller class size
Recognition of student strengths

NEGATIVE OUTCOMES

Over-referral
Over-identification
Over-crowded programs
Kids "slipping through cracks"
Unnecessary segregation
Fragmented learning
Child-deficit model
Perpetuation of expert model

Overhead 1

PROGRAM ORIGINS OF THE IST MODEL



Overhead 2

The Starfish

A young man was walking down a deserted beach just before dawn. In the distance he saw a frail old man.

As he approached the old man, he saw him picking up stranded starfish and throwing them back into the sea.

The young man gazed in wonder as the old man again and again threw the small starfish from the sand to the water. He asked him, "Why do you spend so much energy doing what seems to be a waste of time?"

The old man explained that the stranded starfish would die if left in the morning sun. "But there must be thousands of beaches and millions of starfish," exclaimed the young man. "How can your effort make any difference?" The old man looked down at the small starfish in his hand and as he threw it to safety in the sea, he said;

"It makes a difference to this one!"

IST

TRAINING OBJECTIVES

1. To articulate the general and specific purposes of the Instructional Support Team process.

2. To describe how the IST process functions, including the personnel, steps and timelines involved in its successful implementation.

Overhead 4

All About IST

What do you know? K	What do you want to find out? W	What did you learn? L

Overhead 5

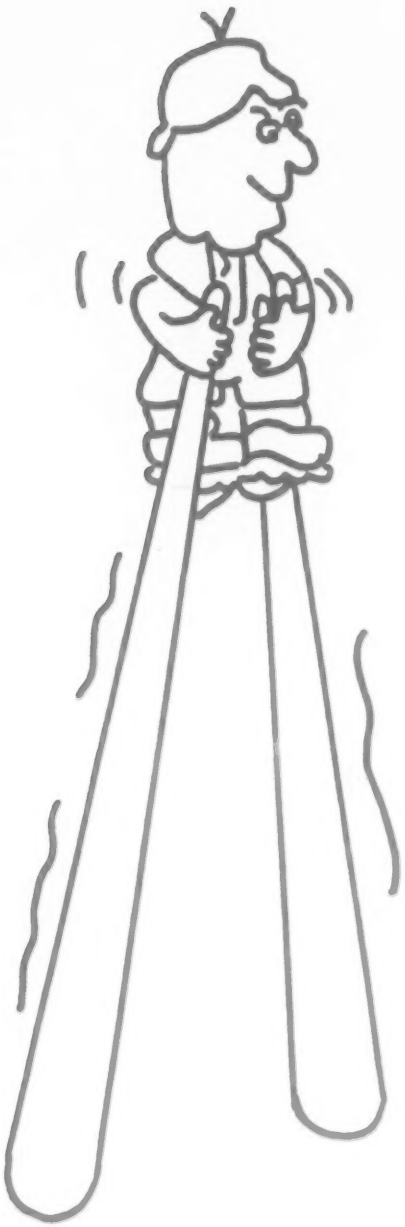
IST
MISSION STATEMENT

In July of 1990, the Pennsylvania Special Education Rules and Regulations introduced the Instructional Support Team Initiative. In many ways, this initiative mirrored as well as expanded upon prior initiatives to form a comprehensive state-wide system to address the diverse learning needs of students who become frustrated, lose interest, and flounder during their elementary school years.

The mission of Instructional Support is to identify students who are at-risk of school failure and to provide them with the type of academic, communication, social/ emotional, and behavioral support needed to succeed in school. Its intent is to create a seamless system where no student suffers from the lack of support. This is accomplished through the development of collaborative school-based structures where team building, shared expertise, and teacher empowerment occur for the betterment of students and teachers alike.

Overhead 6

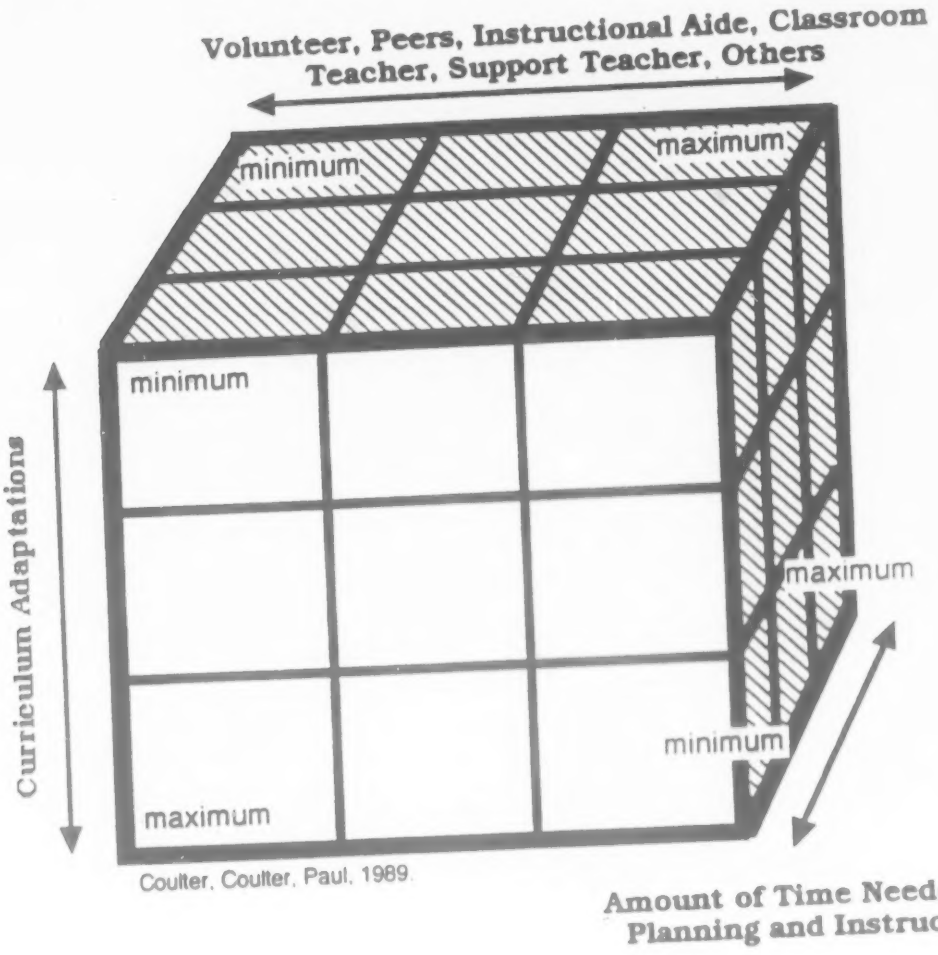
INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT IS A PROCESS WHICH INCLUDES:



1. Identifying students who need academic, behavioral, communication and social/ emotional support.
2. Convening IST meetings to advocate for the specific needs of students.
3. Applying intervention and management strategies.
4. Providing in classroom support for students and teachers.
5. Expanding the capability of classroom teachers by involving them in team-decision making, problem solving and guided practice.
6. Monitoring intervention implementation and student progress.
7. Determining how best to meet the needs of students through a continuum of services.

Overhead 7

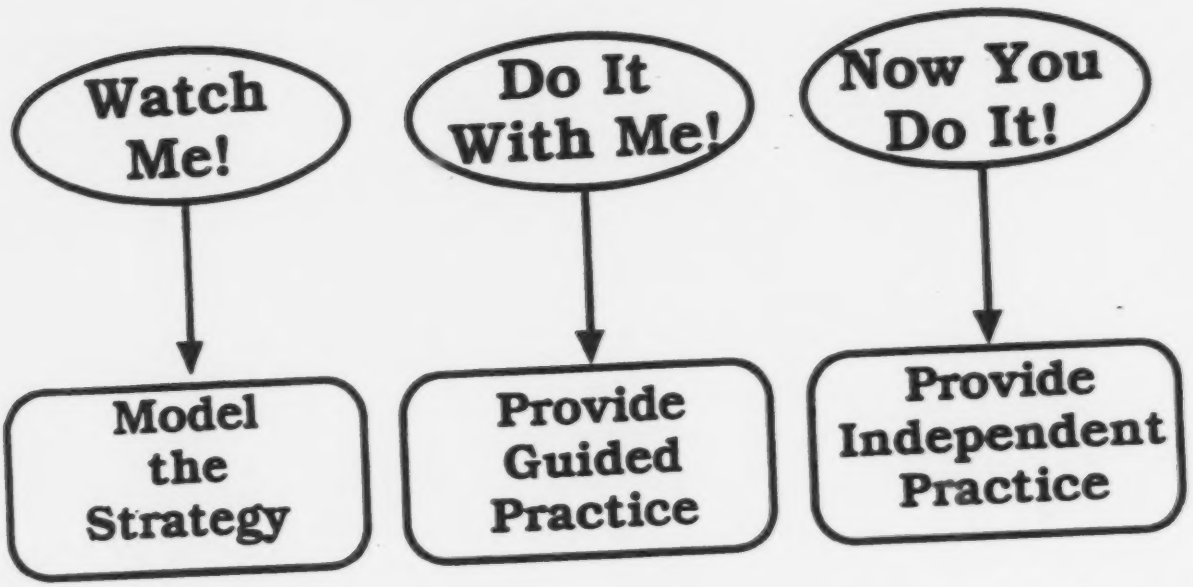
DEGREE OF NEED



The purpose of IST is to create the conditions which will enable the child to experience success.

Overhead 8

THE GUIDED PRACTICE MODEL



Overhead 9

KEY PERSONNEL

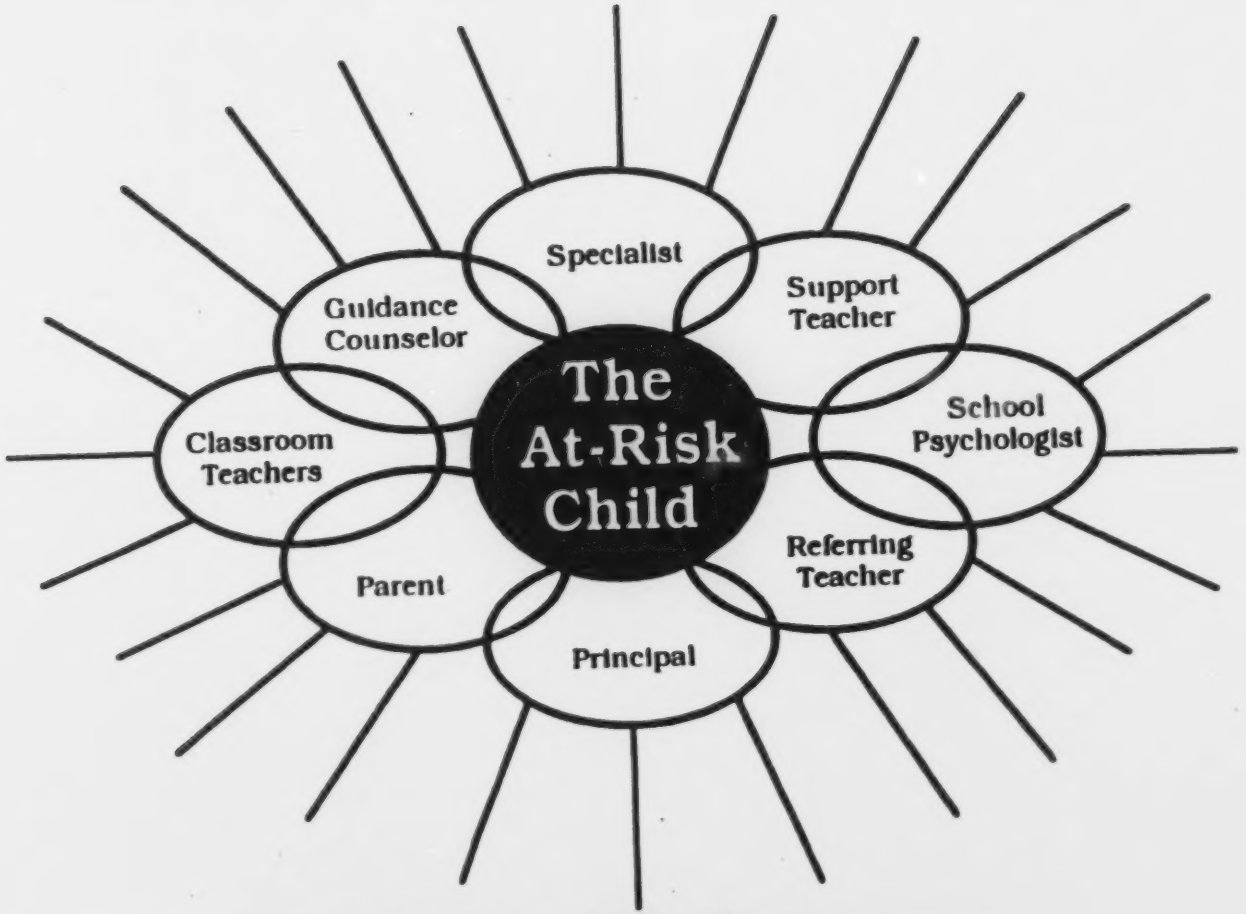
Regional and IU Consultants

Instructional Support Teams

Support Teachers

Overhead 10

Overhead 11



Valuable IST Resources

What expertise does each member bring to the team?

SUPPORT TEACHER'S ROLE

F - facilitate change

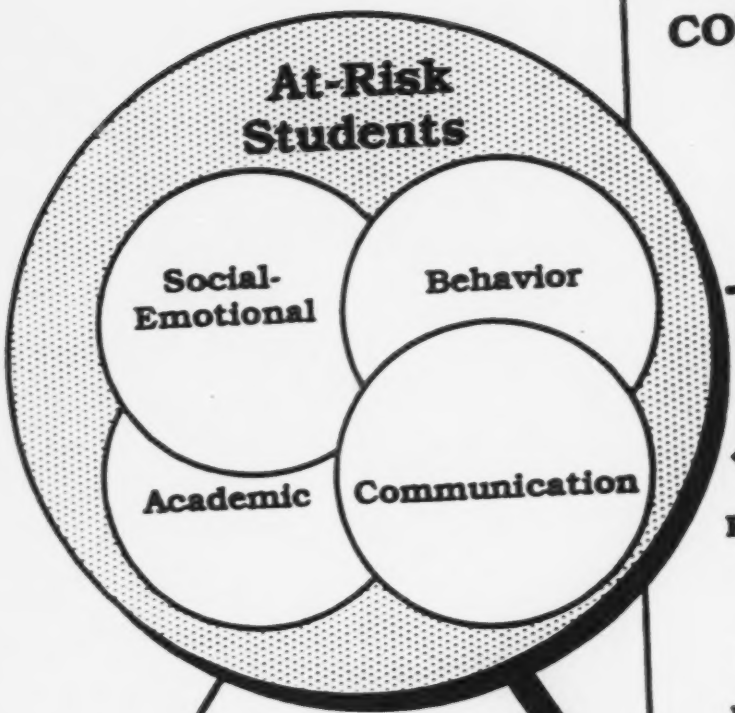
A - assess
adapt
assist

C - coordinate
collaborate
collect
communicate

T - train

S - systematically collect and organize data

Overhead 12



IST COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING PROCESS

A Naturalistic Assessment

Social-Emotional
Behavior
Academic
Communication

◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆

ENTRY

Request for Assistance
Teacher Interview (parent / student)
Observation(s)
Permanent Products
Records Review
Inventories/Checklists
Parent Notification

◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆

HYPOTHESIS FORMING

Assess needs and knowledge to determine instructional match (based on entry level data collection).

◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆

VERIFYING

Goal Setting
Brainstorming
Implementing
Managing/Supporting
Monitoring

◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆

OUTCOME

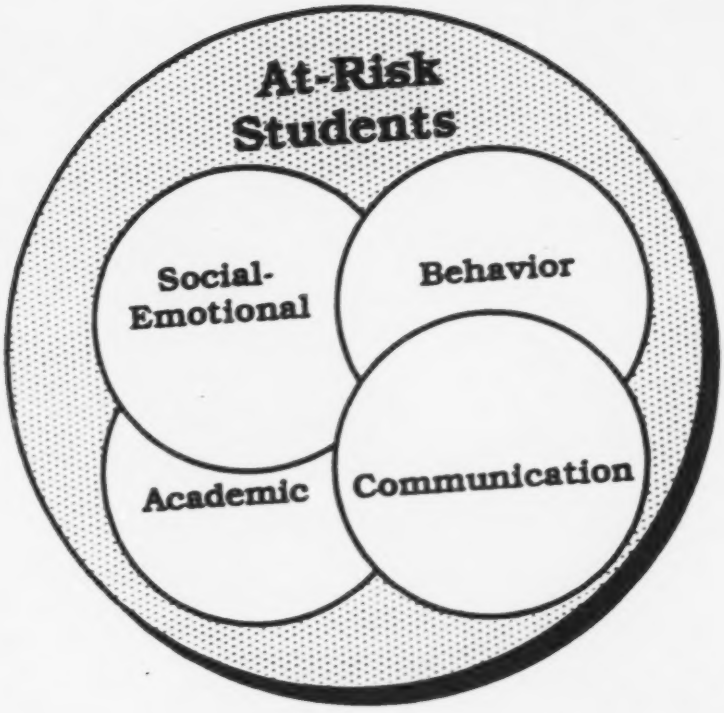
Follow-up. redesign, or evaluate.

◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆

Training Components:

Collaborative / Team Process
Curriculum Based Assessment
Instructional Adaptations
Effective Interaction Patterns
Coping Skills
Instructional Evaluation

Overhead 13



Overhead 13 A

IST COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING PROCESS

A Naturalistic Assessment

Social-Emotional
Behavior
Academic
Communication

◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆

ENTRY

Request for Assistance
Teacher Interview
(parent / student)
Observation(s)
Permanent Products
Records Review
Inventories/Checklists
Parent Notification

◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆

HYPOTHESIS FORMING

Assess needs and knowledge to determine instructional match (based on entry level data collection).

◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆

VERIFYING

Goal Setting
Brainstorming
Implementing
Managing/Supporting
Monitoring

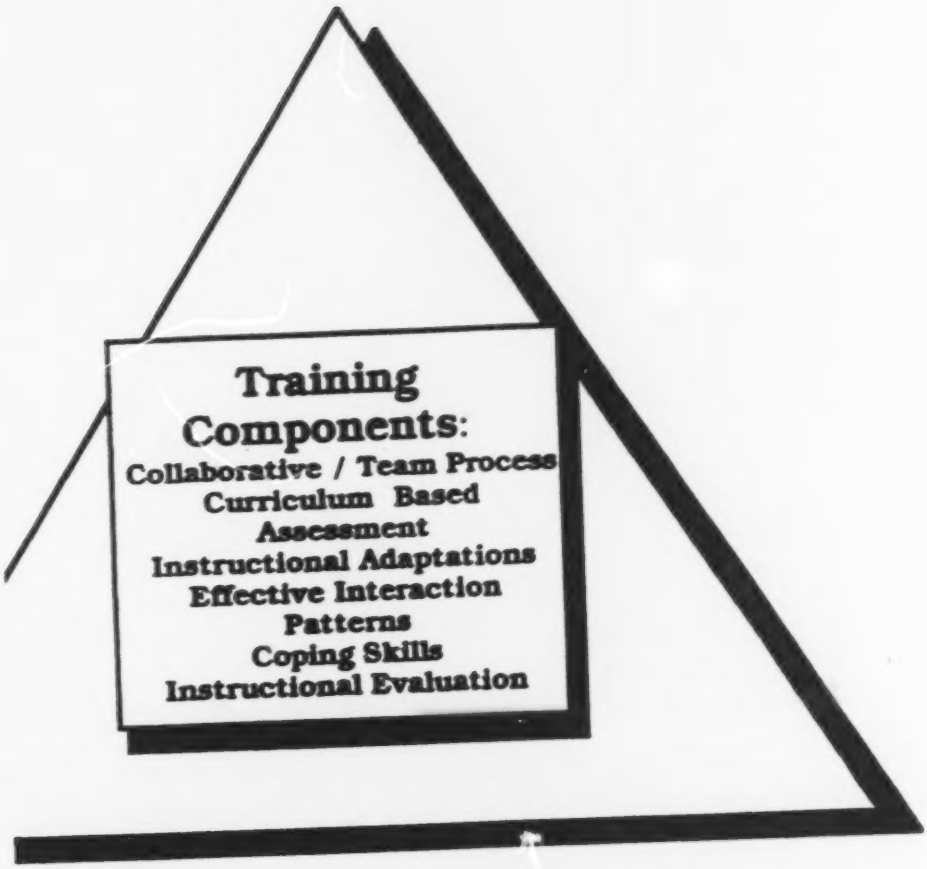
◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆

OUTCOME

Follow-up. redesign, or evaluate.

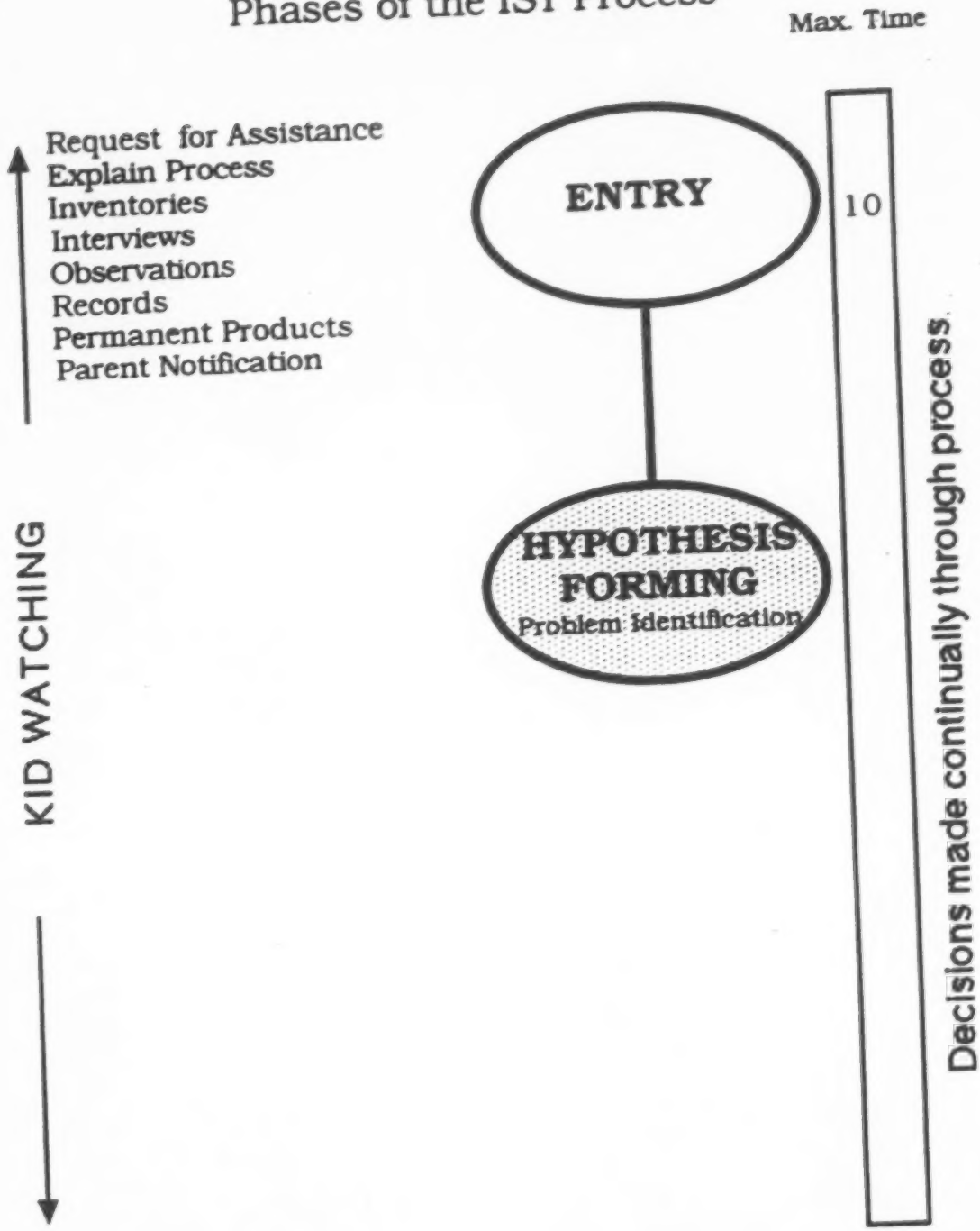
◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆

Overhead 13 B



Overhead 13 C

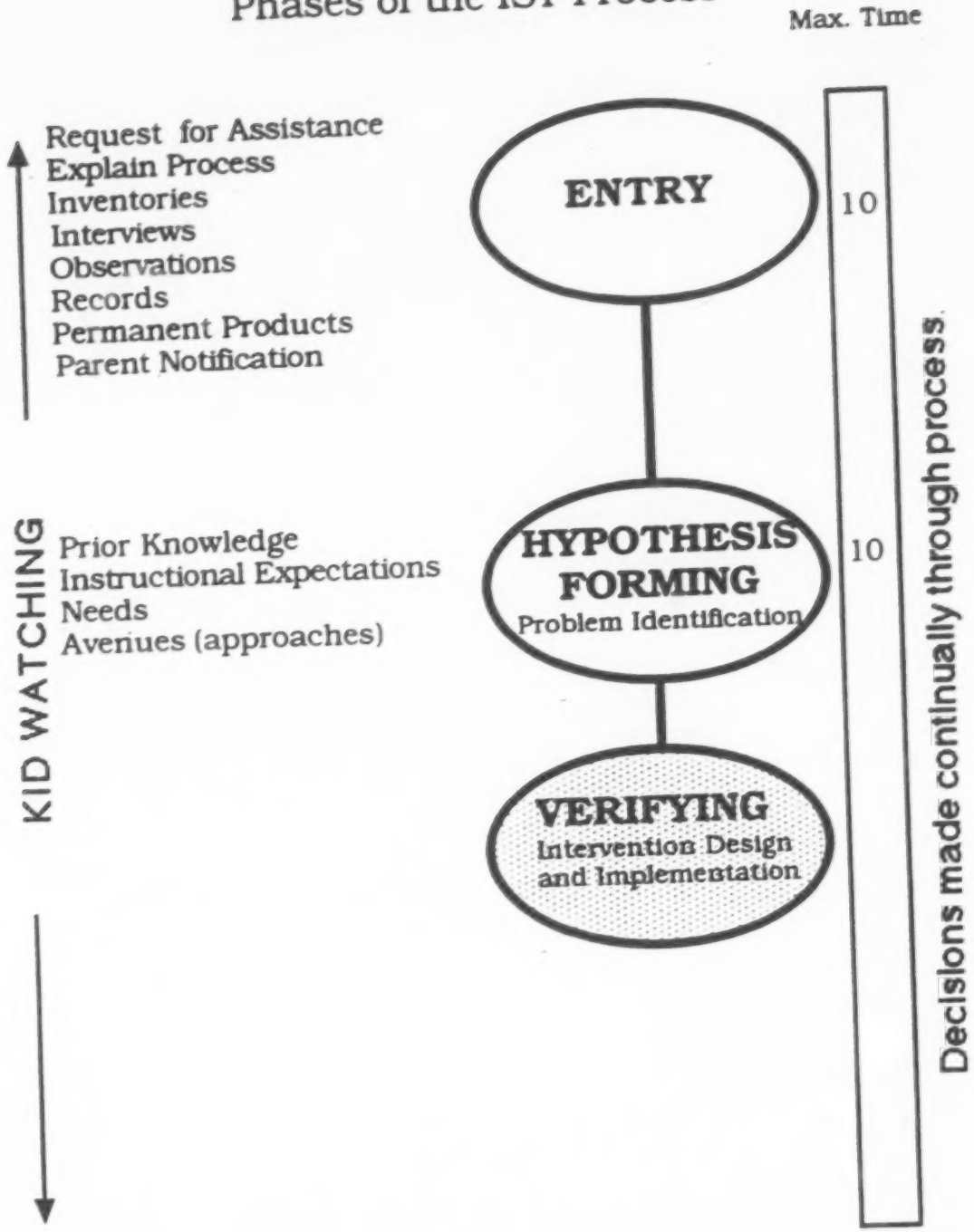
Phases of the IST Process



A SYSTEMATIC SEARCH FOR WHAT WORKS!

Overhead 14

Phases of the IST Process



A SYSTEMATIC SEARCH FOR WHAT WORKS!

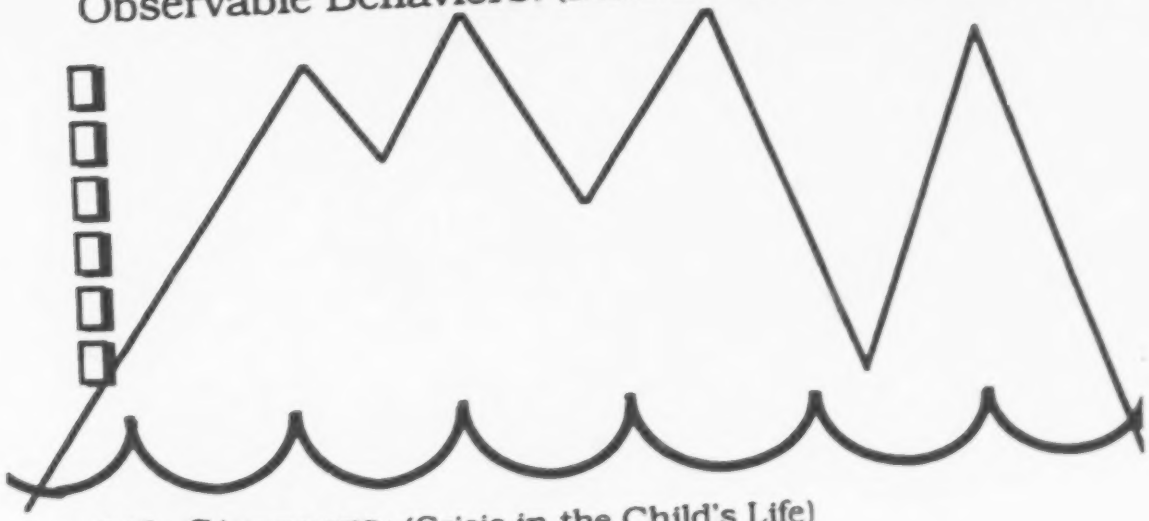
Overhead 15

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The Child "At-Risk"

Name_____ Date_____

Observable Behaviors: (Behavior Performance Indicators)

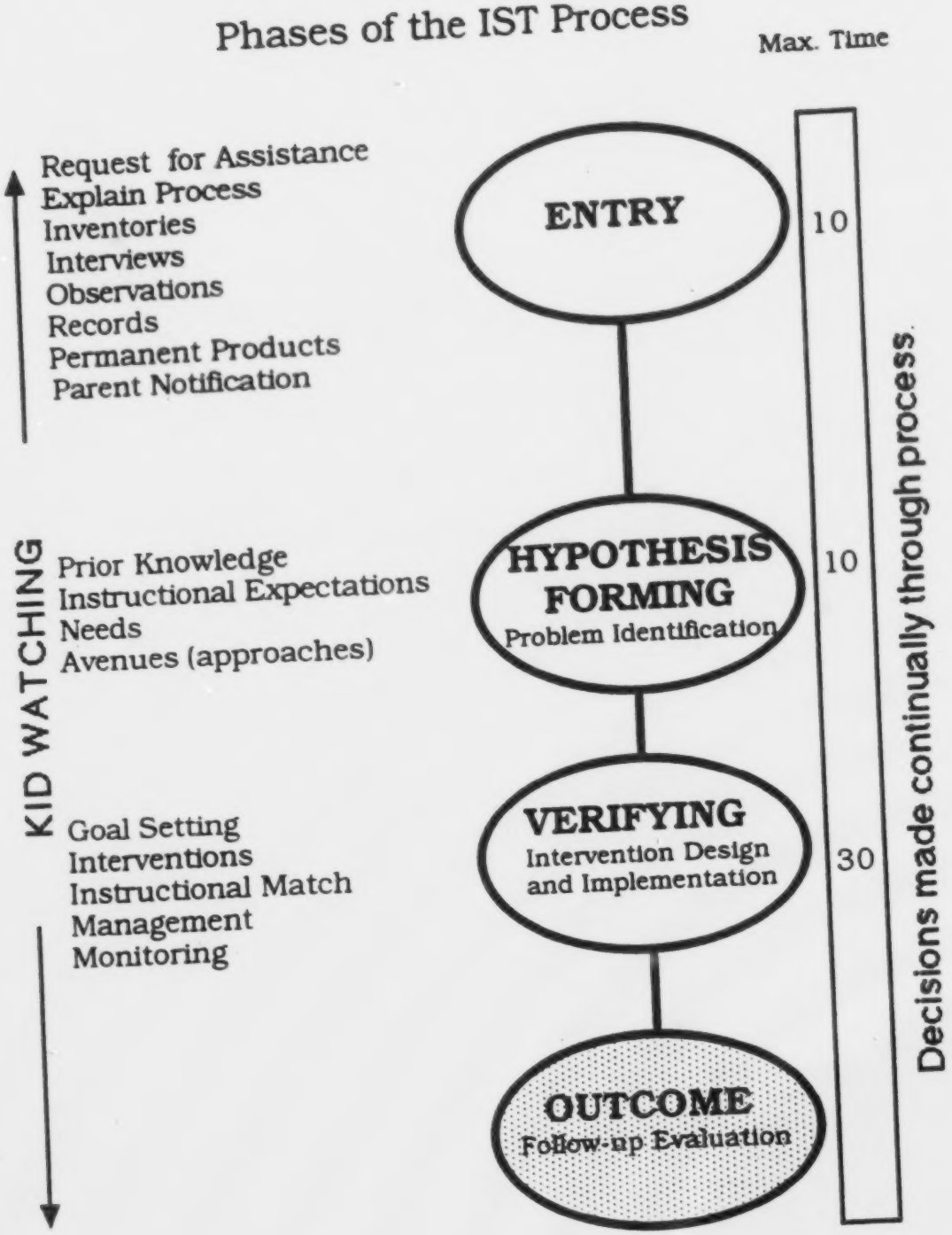


Life Stressors: (Crisis in the Child's Life)

Coping Skill Deficiencies:

Overhead 16

Phases of the IST Process

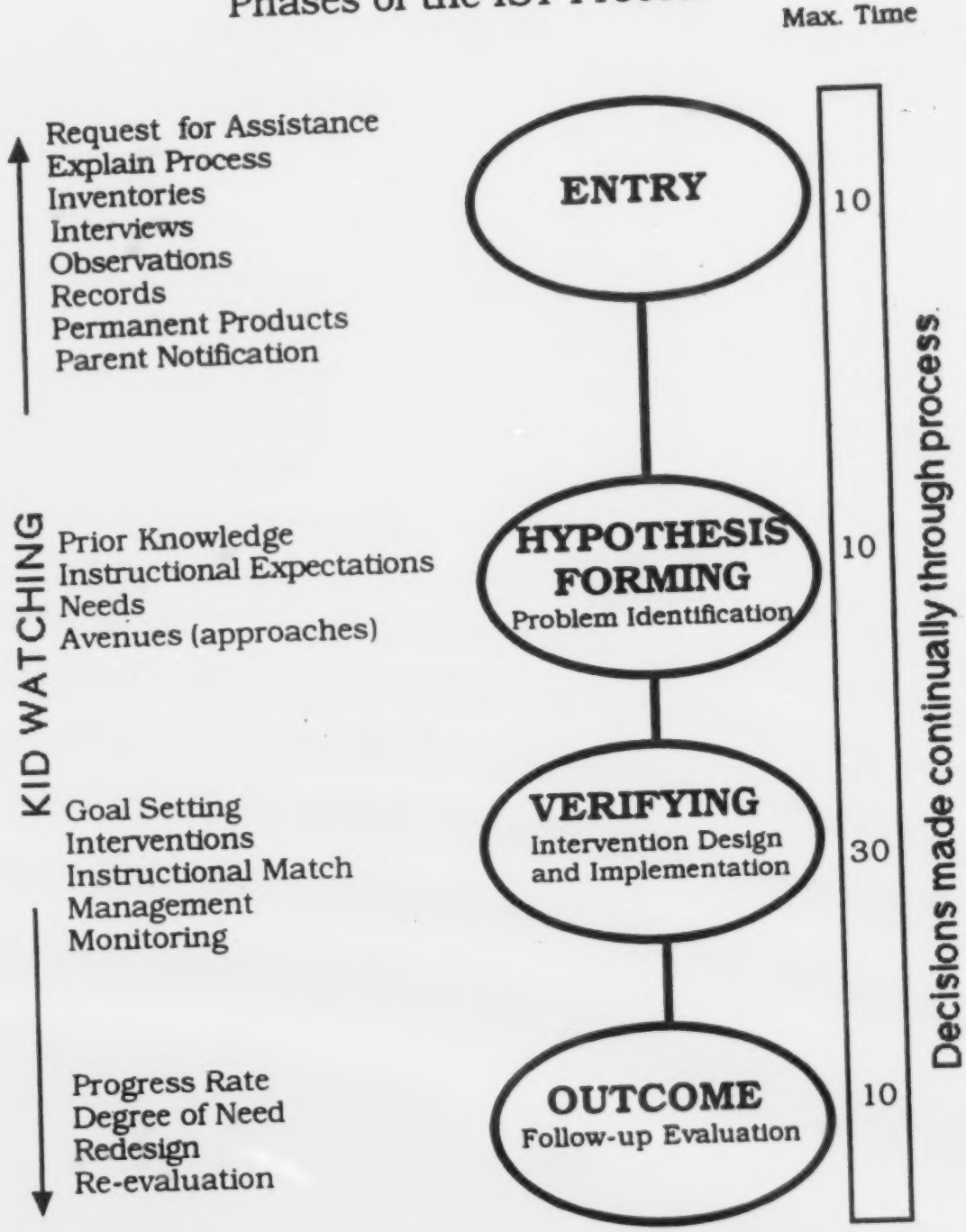


A SYSTEMATIC SEARCH FOR WHAT WORKS!

Overhead 17

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Phases of the IST Process



A SYSTEMATIC SEARCH FOR WHAT WORKS!

Overhead 18

Traditional Staff Development

* "Set and Get" Mentality
(Sparks, 1994)

* One-Shot Training Sessions
(Joyce & Showers, 1982)

* Weak Training Designs
(Desmarais, 1992)

* Content Rich and Process Poor
(Bernal & Torres, 1990)

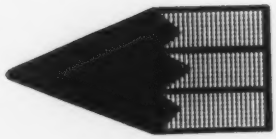
* Overemphasis on Theory
(Joyce & Showers, 1988)

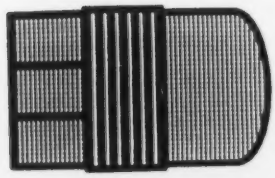
* Lack of Transfer to the Classroom
(Joyce & Showers, 1988)

* Lack of Follow-Up
(Bernal & Torres, 1990)

Teachers Can Be Wonderful Learners!

(Joyce & Showers, 1983)





"Adaptation is essential. There is no endeavor where lack of growth is more clearly and desperately damaging than teaching."

(Joyce & Showers, 1983, p. 31)

Goals of Staff Development

* Promote School Improvement

* Increase Student Learning

* Foster Collegial Collaboration

(Joyce & Showers, 1988)
(Bernal & Torres, 1990)

Effective Approaches to Staff Development

*Viewed as:

- Practical
- Concrete
- Ongoing

* Provide time for:

- Sharing
- Experimenting
- Modifying Behavior

* Incorporate:

- On-call Assistance
- Follow-up

(Joyce & Showers, 1983)

Components of Effective Staff Development

* Presentation of Theory
* Modeling
* Simulated Practice
* Structured Feedback
* Coaching and Guided Practice

(Joyce & Showers, 1980)

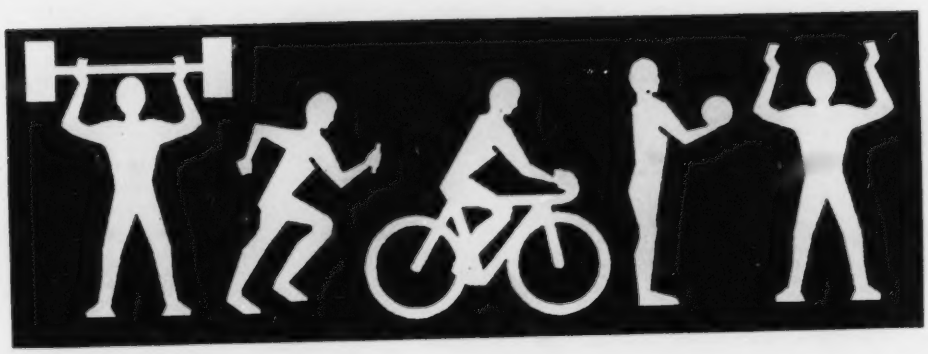
"Executive control consists of understanding the purpose and rationale of the skill and knowing how to adapt it to students, apply it to subject matter, modify or create instructional materials attendant to its use, organize students to use it, and blend it with other instructional approaches to develop a smooth and powerful whole."

(Joyce & Showers, 1983, p. 8)

Importance of Overlearning

* Simulated Practice
* Sustained Practice
* Automaticity

(Joyce & Showers, 1983)
(Bloom, 1986)



The Discomfort of Effective Training

* Requires greater effort than the status quo
* New skills feel more awkward than familiar ones
* Risk involved
* Reduces the pleasure of practice
* Often leads to avoidance and resistance to training

(Joyce & Showers, 1983)

"The teacher who needs the most practice is the one most likely to avoid that practice."

(Joyce & Showers, 1983, p. 9)

The Problem of Transfer

True or False:
If teachers attend a workshop where a skill is explained, demonstrated, and practiced, they will need no further learning to transfer that skill into their active teaching repertoire.

FALSE!

(Joyce & Showers, 1983)

Coaching-

"A process in which education professionals assist each other in negotiating the distance between acquiring new skills or teaching strategies and applying them skillfully and effectively for instruction."

(Showers, 1985, p. 46)

The Value of Coaching

* Most important element in successful training
* Provides a structured format for follow-up
* Extends training into the classroom through guided practice
* Provided by the support teacher

(Joyce & Showers, 1983)

Benefits of Coaching

Coached Teachers:

* Practice more frequently
* Attain greater skill levels
* Use strategies more effectively with students
* Establish a clearer cognitive basis for strategies

(Joyce & Showers, 1988)

The Process of Coaching

* Companionship

* Guided Practice and Technical Feedback

* Analysis of Application

* Adaptation to Students

(Joyce & Showers, 1983)